

A Critical Investigation of Archaeological
Material assigned to Palestinian Jewish-Christians
of the Roman and Byzantine Periods

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The Franciscan Fathers B. Bagatti and E. Testa have developed the hypothesis which holds that Jewish-Christians with a heterodox theology venerated and utilised many important Christian holy sites before they were appropriated by the "Gentile" Church in the fourth century.

This thesis argues that Jewish-Christians should not be defined in terms of heterodox theology but by their maintenance of Jewish praxis, which may accompany various theological perspectives. A detailed examination of the literary traditions and archaeology of the land in general and important Christian holy sites in particular shows that there is no evidence for Jewish-Christians in the heartland of Palestine, which was in the third century extensively populated by pagans. Moreover, there is no evidence that any Palestinian Christians venerated places they considered sacred prior to the fourth century. If the definition of pilgrimage implies travel to specific holy places in order to pray, then there were no Christian pilgrims prior to Constantine's mother, Helena. It was Constantine who established the first Christian holy sites in Palestine, using the pagan model of the sacred shrine. Before Constantine, Christians had visited Palestine out of interest in the land of the Bible, but had not considered any site "holy" (which was too materialist a notion). After Constantine, Christian holy places multiplied. Biblical or apocryphal stories were attached to certain areas; this served in part to fulfil the expectations of the flood of Christian pilgrims who followed Helena's example. Some of the designated Christian holy places had been associated with Biblical or apocryphal stories already (e.g. Bethlehem, Eleona, Golgotha), though only a few sites (e.g. Golgotha, Gethsemane, Bethesda) are probably "genuine" in that they really were locations at which New Testament events took place. Frequently, holy sites were claimed and appropriated by the Church from pagans, Jews and Samaritans (e.g. Mamre, Bethlehem, Golgotha, Bethesda and many tombs and caves). Byzantine holy places were also created which had no traditional significance and where nothing sacred existed before (e.g. the Bethany Cave, the Tomb of the Virgin, the Church of Holy Zion, the Rock of the Agony, the Imbomon). The Christian structures in Nazareth and Capernaum should be included in this category. Small pilgrim churches (the "House of Mary" and the "House of Peter" respectively) were built in these two Jewish cities by Joseph of Tiberias who, acting with the blessing of Constantine, constructed them in order to encourage the conversion of Jews in Galilee. Christian pilgrimage in turn provided financial revenue for Jews, who could then afford to construct such an edifice as the Capernaum synagogue.

For my husband, Paul.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is the result of my own research and that I composed it myself.

Joan E. Taylor

PREFACE

It may come as a surprise to some to learn that I began work on this thesis with a very high regard for the work of the Franciscan scholars, Fr. B. Bagatti and Fr. E. Testa and those that followed them. In New Zealand, where I completed my Bachelor of Divinity degree, I could find only a few of their works, but those that I managed to procure appeared to me to be extremely exciting. It struck me as odd that their books were not more widely known amongst ecclesiastical historians. I was determined to find out as much as possible about their work at the Christian holy sites of Palestine. Their ideas about Jewish-Christian symbols appeared intriguing, perhaps even pointing the way to the origins of Christian iconography. I was awarded the 1985-6 Scholarship by the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem in order to reside at the School and complete a corpus of pre-Constantinian (Jewish-)Christian graffiti in Palestine, and I travelled to Israel with very definite ideas about how I would go about such a study which, I expected, would then form the foundation of a Ph.D. thesis.

It came as quite a shock to discover over and over again that, after fully examining the archaeological and historical contexts of the graffiti, they turned out to post-date the Emperor Constantine. It now became clear to me that most of the graffiti belonged to the era of early Christian pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I was

alarmed to find all the possible material remains of Jewish-Christians in Palestine disappear in the course of my studies, so that my proposed corpus of pre-Constantinian graffiti was becoming smaller and smaller and in time vanished altogether. I had been particularly interested in the beginnings of the Church and the early varieties of faith, especially the beliefs of the Jewish-Christians. I now began to question my own assumptions about this group, and by the time I arrived at New College, Edinburgh, where (thanks to a Commonwealth Scholarship award) I was to undertake my Ph.D. studies, I had significantly altered my previous views about Jewish-Christianity. I had thought formerly that one might distinguish a Jewish-Christian theology which derived from the earliest period of the apostolic Church and manifested itself in later groups deemed heretical by the Church Fathers. This is quite the standard view. As the first chapter of this thesis will show, my definition of what constitutes Jewish-Christianity is now somewhat different. The definition at which I arrived, which stresses praxis rather than theology, forms the backbone of my final examination of alleged Jewish-Christian material remains. Perhaps in part as a consequence of this narrow definition, the results of my study are almost entirely negative as regards these remains.

This examination is not, however, purely negative. As the thesis progressed, I was soon drawn to consider

the changes which swept through Palestine in the Roman and Byzantine periods, the demography of the land, the politics, pilgrimage and the ideology of sacred places. I realised that I could make some modest contribution to the understanding of these important issues by means of an appraisal of the work of Bagatti and Testa, and therefore became excited again about their material, but in quite a different way. At last, I understood precisely what I wished to do in this thesis, and I only hope that my goals have been achieved despite coming at them by a rather circuitous route. The positive results of my examination concern the origins of Christian holy places in Palestine. In some ways the title of the thesis may have been, "The Origins of Christian Holy Places", but the present one is accurate in that it outlines the means to the end.

I hope that this abbreviated history of my voyage into the subject will assure those who have been impressed with the work of the Bagatti-Testa school, and have used their results, that I am immediately sympathetic. I do not wish to appear the "debunker" who dismisses a mass of evidence as being wrongly attributed out of pure scepticism. I did not enter the study with preconceived ideas that I was to become such a critical voice, but only as someone determined to discover historical truth, as far as I was able. I firmly hope that my study is a small contribution to this end.

J.E.T.

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I am indebted to the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem for providing me with the means to do research "on the spot" and also to the Palestine Exploration Fund and the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society, who granted me funds for additional site research in 1988.

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Joan E. Taylor

August, 1989.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AASOR</u>	<u>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</u>
<u>AJA</u>	<u>American Journal of Archaeology</u>
<u>AJBA</u>	<u>Australian Journal of Biblical Archaeology</u>
<u>ATR</u>	<u>Anglican Theological Review</u>
<u>BA</u>	<u>The Biblical Archaeologist</u>
<u>BAIAS</u>	<u>The Bulletin of the Anglo-Israel Archaeological Society</u>
<u>BAR</u>	<u>Biblical Archaeological Review</u>
<u>BASOR</u>	<u>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</u>
<u>CBQ</u>	<u>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</u>
<u>CCSL</u>	<u>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, Turnhout, 1953-</u>
<u>CIJ</u>	J. -B. Frey, <u>Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum</u> , 2 vols, Vatican City, 1936, 1952.
<u>CSCO</u>	<u>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Louvain/Paris etc., 1903-</u>
<u>CSEL</u>	<u>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, Vienna, 1866-</u>
<u>CSHB</u>	<u>Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae, Bonn, 1828-78.</u>
<u>DACL</u>	F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq (eds), <u>Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie</u> , 15 vols, 1907-1953.
<u>EAEHL</u>	M. Avi-Yonah (ed.), <u>Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land</u> , 4 vols, London, 1975-1978.
<u>EI</u>	<u>Eretz Israel</u>
<u>ET</u>	<u>The Expository Times</u>
<u>GCS</u>	<u>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten (drei) Jahrhunderte, Leipzig/Berlin, 1897-</u>

<u>GRP</u>	M. Avi-Yonah, <u>A Gazetteer of Roman Palestine</u> , Jerusalem, 1976.
<u>HTR</u>	<u>The Harvard Theological Review</u>
<u>HUCA</u>	<u>Hebrew Union College Annual</u>
<u>IEJ</u>	<u>Israel Exploration Journal</u>
<u>JAC</u>	<u>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</u>
<u>JBL</u>	<u>Journal of Biblical Literature</u>
<u>JEH</u>	<u>The Journal of Ecclesiastical History</u>
<u>JJS</u>	<u>Journal of Jewish Studies</u>
<u>JPOS</u>	<u>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</u>
<u>JQR</u>	<u>The Jewish Quarterly Review</u>
<u>JRS</u>	<u>Journal of Roman Studies</u>
<u>JSJ</u>	<u>Journal for the Study of Judaism</u>
<u>JSS</u>	<u>Journal of Semitic Studies</u>
<u>JTS</u>	<u>The Journal of Theological Studies</u>
<u>LA</u>	<u>Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Liber Annuus</u>
<u>MRP</u>	M. Avi-Yonah, <u>Map of Roman Palestine</u> , 2nd ed., Jerusalem, 1946.
<u>NT</u>	<u>Novum Testamentum</u>
<u>NTA</u>	E. Hennecke, <u>New Testament Apocrypha</u> , edited by W. Schneemelcher, Eng. transl. by R. McL. Wilson, 2 vols, 1963-1965.
<u>NTS</u>	<u>New Testament Studies</u>
<u>PEFQSt</u>	<u>Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement</u>
<u>PEQ</u>	<u>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</u>
<u>PG</u>	<u>Patrologia Graeca</u> , ed. J. Migne, Paris, 1857-
<u>PGM</u>	H. D. Betz (ed.), <u>The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation</u> , Chicago/London, 1986 (<u>Papyri Graecae Magicae</u>).
<u>PL</u>	<u>Patrologia Latina</u> , ed. J. Migne, Paris, 1844-
<u>PO</u>	<u>Patrologia Orientalis</u> , ed. R. Graffin, F. Nau,

Paris, 1907-

<u>QDAP</u>	<u>Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine</u>
<u>RA</u>	<u>Revue Archéologique</u>
<u>RAC</u>	<u>Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana</u>
<u>RB</u>	<u>Revue Biblique</u>
<u>RSR</u>	<u>Recherches de Science Religieuses</u>
<u>SC</u>	<u>Sources Chrétiennes, Paris, 1940-</u>
<u>ST</u>	<u>Studia Theologica: Scandinavian Journal of Theology</u>
<u>TS</u>	<u>Terra Santa</u>
<u>TU</u>	<u>Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der ältchristlichen Literatur, Leipzig, 1882-</u>
<u>VC</u>	<u>Vigiliae Christianae</u>
<u>ZDPV</u>	<u>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</u>
<u>ZNTW</u>	<u>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche</u>

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores a body of previously excavated and published archaeological material that has been classified as providing evidence of Jewish-Christians in Roman and Byzantine Palestine. The material pertains to the Christian holy places of Palestine and has been used to argue for an early veneration of certain Christian sites: Golgotha, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion, for example.

The origins of the Christian holy places is a controversial subject. It would be beneficial to the Christian communities in charge of the existing sites if these sites were thought to be in some way "genuine". The greater the claim for a given site's authenticity, the more likely it is that Christian tourists will be attracted to visit and thus provide a source of revenue for the community which owns it. Belief in the authenticity of a site is, moreover, frequently a result of individual faith rather than scientific proof. Apart from the element of faith, there are several other elements involved in the identification of a site being holy. At the outset, it is believed that a certain event charged with spiritual significance occurred at such a place, or a Biblical personage is buried there, or else a prophet or saint dwelt there at some time. The holiness of the event or person is transferred to the physical world. As evidence for identifying a particular spot as

being hallowed ground, a Biblical reference, or a passage in early Christian literature, or perhaps simply Church tradition might be cited. Recently, however, archaeological data have also been called as evidence.

Over the past century, excavations have been undertaken at numerous Christian holy places and, as a result, some new "holy relics" in the form of archaeological remains have been identified and exhibited to the public. The alleged Jewish-Christian material is to be found at the Franciscan sites of Nazareth and Capernaum, as well as in the museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem. It is no coincidence that the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land is in almost exclusive possession of this material, because it was through the work of the Franciscan scholars Fr. Bellarmino Bagatti and Fr. Emmanuele Testa and their followers at the Studium¹ that this material was classified as being specifically Jewish-Christian in nature. The other Christian communities of Israel and Jordan, and the state archaeological departments, have been circumspect in their approach to the alleged Jewish-Christian material and have tended not to endorse publicly the Bagatti-Testa school's view. Nevertheless, no one has sought to systematically analyse the school's argument or to discuss the identification of the material in any depth.

The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis, put succinctly², is

that many Christian holy places are genuine because Jewish-Christians identified and preserved sites which were meaningful in the life of Jesus, from the time of his ministry without interruption until the fourth century. These sites were then appropriated by the mainstream "Gentile" Church when the Emperor Constantine began establishing Christian shrines in Palestine. The Jewish-Christian church was centred in Jerusalem and headed first by Peter and then by James, Jesus' brother. The Jewish-Christians practised the Mosaic law and opposed Paul's mission to the Gentiles. In the war preceding Titus' destruction of the Jewish Temple in A.D.70, the Jewish-Christian community fled to Pella in the Decapolis, where an important Jewish-Christian community was established. Many Jewish-Christians then returned to Jerusalem after the war ended and established themselves on Mount Zion. The community was headed by Simeon, son of Cleopas, another of Jesus' relatives. The relatives of Jesus themselves constituted an important hierarchy in the Jewish-Christian church. After A.D.135, when all Jews were evicted from Jerusalem, the Jewish-Christians avoided eviction because they were not counted as Jews^a. However, they considered themselves to be Jews, and the other (Gentile) Christians of Palestine condemned them as heretics. The two ethnically distinct churches existed in mutual enmity side by side in Palestine. The Jewish-Christian church developed its own distinctive theology, closely connected with the veneration of holy

places and caves. According to Bagatti, it is simply logical to presume that the Jewish-Christians of Palestine accredited importance to the sites which they found in their religious literature. These sites have "una base storica poggiata sulla trasmissione di una tradizione antica"⁴. Noting the preponderance of caves employed in later Christian holy sites, Testa proposed that Jewish-Christians employed caves for certain sacred mysteries⁵, particularly for baptismal rites and special meals. Moreover, Jewish-Christians, according to Bagatti and Testa, used a complex system of cryptic signs and symbols to illuminate their theology. Some of these were used in the iconographical repertoire of the Church as a whole, and some were peculiar to the Jewish-Christians of Palestine⁶.

For those belonging to the Bagatti-Testa school there is no doubt that Jewish-Christians must have existed in Palestine prior to the Peace of the Church; these are the minim referred to in rabbinic literature. Their history is traced by recourse to many references in patristic sources to Ebionites, Nazoraeans, Elchas²_{ites} and, sometimes, Gnostics. There is equally no doubt expressed that the Jewish-Christians must have possessed a recognisable theology distinct from that of developing orthodoxy. The foundations of this notion are, again, to be assembled from wide-ranging patristic references. The existence of Jewish-Christians in Palestine, their

maintenance of Christian holy places and their distinctive theology and practice are all presented together as part of a closely-argued package which can at first appear plausible, and has been seen as such by many. In this thesis, however, it will be argued that the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis is not plausible. It will be suggested that it is wrong in its basic assumptions about Jewish-Christians and that its analysis of historical and archaeological material is frequently inadequate.

The arguments for the identification of a body of archaeological evidence proving the existence of Palestinian Jewish-Christians of the first five centuries will be assessed in reference to key Christian holy sites. The literary and archaeological material pertaining to each site will be approached using an empirical method which will test whether there are any solid grounds for proposing that Jewish-Christians used a given site prior to the fourth century. The evidence will be analysed to determine what clues it might give to the history of each site. In approaching the evidence in this way, it will be seen that there are more convincing alternatives to explain the origins of Christian holy places than the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis. While no single, simple explanation can be presented to encompass the origins of all the sites under examination, there is no justifiable reason to posit the existence of Palestinian Jewish-Christians in any attempt to discover the origins of these holy places.

Before proceeding to analyse the material pertaining to key early Christian holy sites, however, it is necessary to gain a firm understanding of what is meant by the term "Jewish-Christian" and to review the most recent studies concerning Jewish-Christianity. It will be argued that the Jewish-Christians did not have a distinct theology which separated them from the catholic Church, but that they were distinguished by their maintenance of Jewish praxis. In Chapter Two, the history of the Bagatti-Testa school will be reviewed. The place of the school in the history of Palestinian archaeology and Jewish-Christian studies will be determined and its influence traced. This survey will show that the Bagatti-Testa school has not been aware of many important recent studies into Jewish-Christianity and has relied on outdated terms, concepts and methods. In Chapter Three, which concerns the religious demography of third-century Palestine, it^{will}_λ be argued that the term minim does not refer specifically to Jewish-Christians. It will also be seen that there is no literary evidence for Jewish-Christian sectarians living in Palestine in the third century, though both orthodox and heterodox Christians did live in important cities like Caesarea and Gaza, and in a few small villages. Archaeological remains show that the country was mainly populated by pagans⁷, though it had sizeable Jewish and Samaritan minorities in Galilee and Samaria respectively. The pagan presence in

itself provides a clue to some of the reasons why Christian holy places in Palestine may have come into existence. The following chapter will explore Constantine's attitude to paganism. It will be argued that the pagan concept of the sacred shrine to which pilgrims flocked was the basis for the concept of a Christian holy place (and eventually a holy land) which would itself draw pilgrims, and that the establishment of Christian holy places was part of an operation to rid Palestine of paganism. It will be argued that there were no Christian holy places to which pilgrims came to pray before Constantine. As an example of how Christians appropriated sites important to pagans, Jews and Samaritans, which had no previous Christian history, the case of Mamre will be discussed. In the subsequent chapters which investigate the material assigned by the Bagatti-Testa school to Jewish-Christians, it will be argued that there is no archaeological evidence for the existence of Christian holy sites prior to the fourth century and no evidence for the existence of Jewish-Christians at these places.

While the purpose of this thesis is at its foundation negative in seeking to show how a certain hypothesis is essentially false, there are many positive results which may be gleaned along the course of the argument. These will be enumerated in the conclusion. The argument against the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis provides a way through the complex aspects involved in the origins

of Christian holy places so that diverse disciplines (such as archaeology, history, patristics, epigraphy, iconography) can be brought together to bear on key problems. It is therefore hoped that this study might shed further light on the reasons for the development of Christianity's holy sites, the manner in which such sites were established and the phenomenon of early Christian pilgrimage.

PART ONE: DEFINITIONS AND SCHOLARLY BACKGROUND

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEMS OF JEWISH-CHRISTIANITY: TERM AND DEFINITION

As was explained in the introduction, the Bagatti-Testa school has developed the notion that Jewish-Christians, with a peculiar, identifiable theology, were responsible for the early veneration and preservation of important Christian holy sites. It has been possible for the Bagatti-Testa school to develop such ideas in a climate of uncertainty about who the Jewish-Christians really were, but recently there has been progress made in many aspects of Jewish-Christian studies, so that we are better equipped to understand^S the nature and diversity of Jewish-Christianity. The Bagatti-Testa school has relied upon the theories of the last generation of historians working on the subject of Jewish-Christianity, notably those of Jean Daniélou, and applied these to archaeology. However, one might question whether these theories are reliable in determining historical groups which may or may not have left archaeological remains.

"Jewish-Christianity" and "Judaео-Christianity" are synonymous terms used in modern scholarship to refer to a supposed religious phenomenon which spans the period from the very beginnings of Christianity to some time in the fifth century, when it is perceived to be extinct. Jewish-Christians are generally understood to be marginalised, accepted neither by church nor by

synagogue, because they intended to be both Jewish and Christian at one and the same time. The multiple facets¹ of Jewish-Christianity render it a broad category, and in recent years many have attempted to define its various sub-groups somewhat differently². Despite the terminological chaos, it is still considered a useful umbrella term to cover a variety of groups, from Jews who believed in Christ in the first century to sectarian groups in the fourth century. However, does the generalised use of the term "Jewish-Christianity" obscure historical realities rather than illuminate them?

It is now thirty years since Jean Daniélou published his analysis of the theology of Jewish-Christianity³. While his work was based on texts, it was not founded on any writings within the New Testament canon⁴. Moreover, in defining "Jewish-Christianity", Daniélou stressed that it manifested itself in a type of thought which was expressed in forms borrowed from Judaism. The main criteria he used to establish a piece of literature as Jewish-Christian were: a date prior to the middle of the second century; a literary genre popular in Judaism; and the presence of ideas, notably those of apocalyptic literature, which he thought characteristic of Jewish-Christianity⁵. Since it was not necessary to apply all criteria simultaneously, Daniélou was able to classify a text as Jewish-Christian on the basis that it showed, for example, liberty in its use of Biblical citations, an

allegorical exegesis and an angelomorphic Christology⁶. As R. A. Kraft has pointed out, this approach was undertaken without consideration of whether any historical groups consciously adhered to such a theology. Daniélou's argument was circular: the theology became the evidence for positing the existence of historical groups, while the groups' existence became the rationale for introducing the theology⁷.

The idea of a somehow "Jewish" Christianity standing apart from a Gentile Church originated in the concepts of the Tübingen school, a hundred and sixty years ago. F. C. Baur saw a grave conflict between a "Jewish" Christianity, led by Peter, and a Gentile Christianity, led by Paul, standing behind the gloss of Acts⁸. Already in 1886, W. A. Hilgenfeld modified Baur by pointing out the varieties of thought among the Urapostel⁹. Indeed, Baur's determination of Jewish and Gentile Christianity has long been recognised as being too simplistic a model, but it is still considered useful to hold on to the concept of these two streams. However, as R. E. Brown has argued, Jewish culture and Hellenistic culture were not mutually exclusive milieux, and consequently a distinction between a Jewish and a Gentile Christianity on cultural, or even theological, terms is a false one¹⁰. The beliefs and practices of Jews within the Church would have varied as much as did Christian Gentiles' belief and practices, and there is no reason to doubt that both ethnic groups participated in the full spectrum of

possible attitudes. There is no sure way of dividing the Christian Jews from the Gentiles on theological terms. Simply in regard to the Jewish law, some Jews and their Gentile converts appear to have steadfastly followed Jewish praxis, the **דת משה ויהודית** (m. Ket. 7:6): Sabbath observance, customs, festivals, food laws, circumcision of sons (following the "circumcision party"); other Jews and their Gentile converts rejected most Jewish praxis as being obsolete under the new covenant (Paul); still more stood somewhere in between the two positions (Peter and James).

It must surely be recognised that if Jewish-Christianity were to be defined as encompassing all Jews who were also Christians, then the term would be meaningless¹¹. For it to have any real meaning, the term must refer not only to ethnic Jews but those who, with their Gentile converts, upheld the praxis of Judaism. It is perhaps unnecessary to strain a point arguing a case for a hyphen, but technically the term "Jewish-Christian", if it is used as a meaningful concept, must imply one, even if at times it is omitted. It is bi-religious rather than ethnico-religious in application. Judaism and Christianity as two distinct religions are, in Jewish-Christianity, combined. To some extent, the term is judgemental and anachronistic, coming from a later period of history. The Jewish-Christians of the first century would not have considered themselves to be

combining two religions, for they never accepted that Christianity was anything but the proper flowering of Judaism. The same is true for Paul. It was he who represented Gentiles as a wild olive shoot grafted on to the ancient trunk of Israel (Rom. 11:17-24). Nevertheless, as Martin Goodman has pointed out, as early as A.D.96 a distinction was drawn between ethnic and religious Jews for the sake of the fiscus Judaicus¹². Some of the first seeds of this distinction are found in the Church. Paul's campaign against the maintenance of Jewish praxis was a leitmotiv of his mission. To Paul, the praxis was irrelevant under the new covenant in which, "there is neither Jew nor Greek" (Gal. 3:24). He would understand the Church as the new Israel in which all were Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29) but he would also speak of his "former life in Judaism" (Gal. 1:13); the law was obsolete. Paul was therefore not a Jewish-Christian even though a Christian Jew.

While the first century is not of primary concern in this discussion, it is important to start here in order to base later developments on some kind of firm ground, and to realise that the first-century church was capable of infinitely more permutations of theology and practice than those of which we are aware. This makes it exceedingly difficult to trace lines of continuity between segments of the earliest Church and later marginalised groups.

Some have sought to find continuity between fourth

century groups east of the Jordan River, identified by Epiphanius as Nazoraeans and Ebionites (Pan. xxix.7.7-8; xxx.2.7), and the Jerusalem church by arguing for the historicity of so-called Pella tradition¹³. It is recorded by Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. iii:5:3) and Epiphanius (Pan. xxix.7.7-8; xxx.2.7; De Mens. et Pond. xv)²¹, and Epiphanius himself makes a clear connection between these Jewish-Christian groups and refugees from Jerusalem. In this tradition the Jerusalem church fled the city during the revolt of A.D.66-70 and went to Pella, across the Jordan in the region of the Decapolis. According to Epiphanius, in Pella the heresy of the Nazoraeans and the Ebionites had its beginning and yet, interestingly, he also states that those who went to Pella returned to Jerusalem after the war was over (De Mens. et Pond. xv). Some scholars have rejected the tradition outright as being completely lacking in historical foundation¹⁴. Others have sought to find the origins of the tradition in the foundation story of the Pella community¹⁵. At most, it would be possible to say that some Jerusalem Christians went to Pella, and some members of this groups remained in Pella and developed new ideas. However, Eusebius' history contains a separate and much more credible tradition from Hegesippus which appears to know of no flight to Pella, and has the ethnically Jewish church of Jerusalem continuing without interruption until the Bar Kochba war. Eusebius takes

some pains to provide the troubled history of this group, with bishops that were "Hebrews in origin, who had received the knowledge of Christ with all sincerity" (Hist. Eccles. iv.5). Never does Eusebius imply that the church, though Jewish, was sectarian. Its demise was prompted by two civil wars in which the Christians' probable pacifism and associations with Gentiles can hardly have endeared them to the citizens of Jerusalem as a whole. During the second revolt they were persecuted by Bar Kochba (Hist. Eccles. iv.8) and eventually expelled by Hadrian like all other ethnic Jews (Hist. Eccles. iv.5).

The Jewish-Christian church, however, cannot be equated with the Jerusalem community alone. Moreover, it is by no means sure that the Jerusalem church should, in its entirety, be classified as Jewish-Christian. It is not known whether they continued to maintain Jewish praxis, even though in the middle of the first century they were influenced by the Pharisaic "circumcision party" (Acts 11:2; 15: 1, 5; Gal. 2:12), who advocated full adherence to Jewish praxis. It is important to recognise the widespread success of the mission from the Aramaic-speaking Jewish church in the first century. The fact that the Aramaic word "Nazoraean" and its cognates, rather than the Greek word "Christian", became the normative terms for believers in Christ in Persia, Arabia, Armenia, Syria and Palestine¹⁶ gives us some clue to the success of early missions from the Jewish Aramaic-speaking parts of the church. The New Testament writings

state or strongly imply that communities had been founded in Galilee (Mark 16:7, Acts 9:31), Lydda (Acts 9:32-35), Joppa (Acts 9:36-43), Caesarea (Acts 10:1-18; 12:19), Samaria (Acts 8:4-25; 9:31, 15:3), Cyprus (Acts 11:19), Ethiopia (cf. Acts 8:26-40)¹⁷, Cyrene (Acts 11:19) and Phoenicia (Acts 15:3). The list of those Jews who hear the gospel at Pentecost must hint at the extent of the early communities, even if the classical "Twelve Kingdoms" model was used as a literary device to express the dispersal of these churches. The list refers to (Jewish) residents of Parthia, Mediā, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judaea¹⁸, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, Rome (specifically mentioning here both Jews and proselytes), Crete and Arabia.

However, though the origins of such churches might have been Jewish ethnically or by conversion, this tells us nothing at all about the role of Jewish praxis in these communities. Not all Christian Jews belonged to the circumcision party, even in the church of Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew, probably written in Syria, is generally considered to be the most Jewish of the Gospels, but it also displays a liberal attitude to Gentile Christians (e.g. Matt. 21:43; 28:19). The Didache, most likely also written in Syria, is strongly influenced by Jewish forms in its careful preservation of Jewish eucharistic prayers (ix, x), its triple recital of

the main prayer (viii.3 cf. the Eighteen Benedictions, Dan. 6:10, Ps. 55:17) and in adapting the popular treatise of the Two Ways (cf. Ep. Barn. xviii-xx, cf. 1QS iii.13-iv.26). The members of the group are self-consciously separating from the Jewish community (the "hypocrites") by changing their fast days from Monday and Thursday to Wednesday and Friday (viii.1), celebrating the Lord's Day rather than the Sabbath (xiv), and making roaming Christian prophets their high priests (xiii), but the Didache cannot be called "Jewish-Christian" simply because it exhibits Jewish features.

If one can trace Jewish roots in any given text, this does not necessarily mean that a text is Jewish-Christian. Christianity is the child of Judaism. The notion of a Christ is a Jewish concept. The Christian God is the Jewish God. The division between what is somehow exclusively Christian and what is Jewish is an impossible one to make in the early Church. Very many types of Jewish thought fed into the diversity of early Christianity. The corpus of the New Testament itself bears witness to a range of Jewish thought, from the Book of Revelation, the Letter to the Hebrews, the Letters of James, Peter and John, and the Gospel of John, to the epistles of Paul. Most of the Christian Bible is composed of Hebrew scriptures, which have continued to exercise a dynamic influence on the development of Christian theology. Richard Longenecker's determination of the Christology of early Jewish-Christianity¹² is therefore

only a determination of a type of Christology in early Christianity, and in no way significant for the history of Jewish-Christian groups, meaningfully defined. Daniélou has determined complexes of Christian thought heavily indebted to Judaism, but not Jewish-Christianity as such. From its earliest Jewish roots, the Church absorbed a great variety of post-exilic Jewish beliefs^{19a}, and in some places a closer attachment to these roots persisted than in others. It is therefore not surprising that recent studies into the roots of Egyptian²⁰, North African²¹ and, especially, Syrian Christianity²² find multifarious Jewish ideas and forms of expression in the early literature. Rome itself is the most obvious example of how the Church developed. The early Jewish church there was well-established long before Paul's arrival (cf. Acts 28:11-30), and yet Rome became one of the most orthodox of all churches. "Jewishness" had nothing to do with heterodoxy, but gradually, the maintenance of Jewish praxis did.

It is very likely that the critical turning point for Jews within the Church was A.D. 96, when Nerva exempted ethnic Jews who no longer practised their ancestral customs from paying the tax of two denarii for the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Rome (Cassius Dio, Hist. Rom. xxxvii.16.5-17.1). If it was by Jews' personal declaration that the state recognised Jews liable to be taxed, as Goodman has argued, then it was up

to Jews within the Church to decide whether they were religiously still Jews or something else. Certainly, it was a logical assumption that if Gentiles did not have to become Jews to be saved, then Jews did not have to maintain the law either (as is implied by Acts 21:21), but communities need not have abandoned Jewish praxis at the same time, or in the same way, or completely. However, by the beginning of the second century, it is probable that many, if not most, Christian communities were favouring the Pauline attitude to the law.

In the letters of Ignatius, written within the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98-117), the bishop warns the churches, particularly in Magnesia and Philadephia, to beware of Judaisers²⁴. (The term "Judaisers" is here meant to refer to persons who actively campaigned amongst the Christian community for a return to Jewish praxis, or maintenance of Jewish praxis, beyond the point when it was the norm in the community.) Ignatius does not call them by this name, rather "plausible wolves" (Philad. ii) or "poisonous weeds" (Philad. iii), but he identifies the group as following the "charters" (Philad. viii.2), by which he means the Torah. They refuse to eat the eucharistic meal with the others (Philad. iv). They hold separate meetings (Magnes. iv). They do not respect the authority of the bishop (Philad. i-iv; vii; Magnes. iv; vi). They value the Prophets highly and claim that if they do not find a thing in the Scriptures, they refuse to believe it in the Gospel (Philad. v; viii; ix). They

use the Prophets to propound "Judaism" (Philad. vi; Magnes. viii; ix), here perceived as something other than the religion of the Church. Against these Judaisers, Ignatius writes: "we have seen how former adherents of the ancient customs have since attained to a new hope; so that they have given up keeping the sabbath, and now order their lives by the Lord's Day instead" (Magnes. ix). According to him, Jewish praxis had been abandoned by Christian Jews. Ignatius clearly feels on firm ground in identifying the Judaisers as a threat to the unity of the "catholic Church" (cf. Smyrn. viii), which incorporated Jews who had abandoned Jewish praxis and Gentiles together. He nowhere identifies the Judaisers as coming from Jerusalem or even as being Jews. Furthermore, they are dangerous not because they themselves practise Judaism, but because they pull away from episcopal authority and cause division by refusing to share table-fellowship with Gentiles. Oddly, however, Ignatius characterises the person speaking for Judaism as being uncircumcised (Philad. vi). This may indicate that some in their number were godfearers or people of mixed descent²⁵ rather than proselytes or Jews. They may even have been Gentiles. Two centuries later it is doubtful whether most of the Judaisers were Jewish at all.

Origen would characterise the Judaisers of his day as going to the synagogue on Saturday and the church on Sunday (in Lev. hom. v.8)²⁶, but he gives no indication

of their race. Ephrem warns Christians against sharing the Passover supper with Jews²⁷, which demonstrates that Jewish festivals exerted a strong attraction over Christians. John Chrysostom wrote eight homilies to discourage this kind of activity²⁸. At this stage, the Judaisers were very probably Gentiles who were attracted to the traditions of Judaism²⁹. A. P. Hayman has argued that by the seventh century in Syria the majority of Judaisers were Gentiles³⁰. For example, the layman in The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite Against a Jew (xxii.15) says:

"If Christianity is good, behold, I am baptised as a Christian. But if Judaism is also useful, behold, I will associate partly with Judaism that I might hold on to the Sabbath"³¹.

The legal codes of Theodosius and Justinian record the existence of the so-called Caelicolae or Coelicolae ("inhabitants/worshippers of the heavens") who wished to participate in Jewish rites and influence others (Cod. Theod. xvi.8.19; Cod. Just. i.9). The sect was considered a recent innovation and they are not identified as Jews who wished to revert to former practices. Jerome presents Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea in Syria, as a Judaiser³² because, while not a Jew himself, he exhorted his male followers to be circumcised³³.

It is therefore important to distinguish between Judaising Jewish-Christians, like those of the "circumcision party" in Jerusalem, and later Judaisers who appear to have been, in the large part, Gentiles who

felt it "useful" to associate with both religions. It is also important to distinguish the Judaising Jewish-Christians from the other Jewish-Christians whose praxis was Jewish but who accepted Gentiles in the Church as equals. Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century, clearly makes this distinction. He finds no quarrel with Jewish-Christians of the latter kind (Dial. xlvii cf. xlv.1-2), though he admits that some do. He does object to Judaisers who wished to convert the Gentiles to Judaism as well as to Christianity.

After Justin, Jewish-Christians, as defined as a group of Christian Jews and their converts within the Church who upheld the Mosaic customs, are no longer found in the literature as being accepted within the catholic Church (either as part of the mainstream or within increasingly marginalised Gnosticism). Celsus would characterise Jews who believed in Christ as having left the ancestral law, deserting to another name and another life (Origen, Contra Celsum ii.1). We can say, then, with some degree of certainty, that Jewish praxis was abandoned by most Jews within the Church during the last part of the first century and the first part of the second, so that by the end of this century, few of these Jews maintained their links with Judaism. There is then no reason to distinguish them as significantly different from the other ethnic groups that went into the diversity that constituted the Church in this period. Nor should other Jews of later times who became Christians and no

longer positively sustained the practice of Mosaic law be classified as "Jewish-Christians" in the technical sense. Origen knew of Jewish converts to Christianity (in Ezech. ix.4, in Num. hom. xiii.5). The fourth-century Count Joseph of Tiberias is a famous example (Epiphanius, Pan. xxx.4.12) of one such convert³⁴. Jerome speaks of "a believing brother who had been a Jew" (Ep. cxxv.12). The Theodosian Code records laws which forbid harassment of Jews ^{who} fled Judaism "and resorted to the worship of God" (e.g. xvi.8.1, A.D. 315/339; cf. xvi.8.5, A.D. 335; xvi.8.28, A.D. 426).

On the other hand, we can distinguish characteristic Jewish modes of thought and expression which derive from the earliest foundations of churches and which survive within those churches in the writings of its later Gentile bishops and scholars, for example in the work of Aphrahat or Cyril of Jerusalem³⁵, or in the Odes of Solomon. Long after Jewish praxis had been abandoned, Jewish ideas and traditions continued, but, as has been stated above, the presence of Jewish ideas does not necessarily indicate the continuing presence of historical Jewish-Christians. The same is true for the third and fourth centuries as for the first; these "Jewish" ideas and traditions inform us only that the foundations of the community in possession of them may have been ethnically Jewish, and therefore particularly ancient.

Of course, even if ethnic Jews in the Church largely abandoned the praxis of Judaism, this does not mean that Jewish-Christianity ended everywhere, or in the same manner. We know little for sure about the developments in any early Christian communities. It is therefore an impossible task to trace the origins of a sect like the Ebionites to the Jewish-Christian groups of the first century that just happen to be known to us. This has not stopped anyone from trying.

For Baur, the Ebionites derived from a Petrine group which opposed Paul in Galatia, Corinth and Philippi³⁶. Harnack distinguished the Ebionites described by Epiphanius from others described elsewhere. He believed the former to be descendants of Jewish Gnostics, and the latter to be derived from the Jerusalem church³⁷. Seeberg saw them as descendants of a Pharisaic, anti-Pauline extremist group within the Jerusalem church which amalgamated with Gnostic Christians³⁸. For Schoeps, Ebionites were the definitive Jewish-Christians, deriving from the Pharisaic (cf. Acts 15:5) "circumcision party" in Jerusalem³⁹. Klijn and Reinink's analysis of the relevant patristic texts, however, shows that the Church fathers tended to refer to anything "Jewish-Christian" as "Ebionite" and, while it is likely that Irenaeus and Origen describe groups they knew first hand in Rome and Egypt respectively, neither Epiphanius nor Jerome had any direct knowledge of Ebionism as such⁴⁰. The situation has been greatly clarified by G. A. Koch, who argues that

Epiphanius used the term "Ebionite" to refer to any people he considered had "Ebionite" ideas. Koch's analysis of the literary structure of Panarion xxx shows that Epiphanius followed the sequences or partial sequences of Hegesippus, Hippolytus, Pseudo-Tertullian and Philaster for his heresies in general, and incorporated Pseudo-Clementine material, with quotations from the so-called Revelation of Elchasai, for his presentation of the Ebionites. This practice resulted in Epiphanius contradicting himself at several places and jumbling various groups together⁴¹.

The Ebionites are by no means clearly described in the literature. Scholars' attempts to find one group in the diverse descriptions given by patristic authors have not been successful. Perhaps one enlightening fact mentioned in these writings is not simply that the Ebionites observed Jewish customs, but that they did so in an attempt to imitate Christ⁴². This is a completely new argument for Jewish praxis. There are few words about any regard for tradition or the necessity of Judaism for salvation (Hippolytus, Ref. omn. haer. vii.34.1; Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.27). Hippolytus writes that the Ebionites "strongly adhere" to Jewish customs (Ref. omn. haer. Prol. vii.8). Origen says "certain persons regulate their lives according to the law of the Jews like the multitude of the Jews" (Contra Celsum v.61), but were the original Ebionites ethnically Jews or were they

simply Judaistic⁴³, imitating the practice of the Jews?

Irenaeus, who is ^{the} first to write of a group called Ebionites, says they practised circumcision, observed Jewish customs and adored Jerusalem, but rejected the Virgin Birth (Adv. Haer. iv.33.4; v.1.3) and repudiated Paul as an apostate from the law (Adv. Haer. i.26.2; iii.11.7). The latter accusation shows that the origins of the group he describes were not with Peter or James, who appear to have accepted Paul (Acts 15, Gal.2). Furthermore, they may have derived from Jewish-Christian or Judaising elements anywhere in the Church, not just from the Pharisaic faction in Jerusalem. Even if "the poor" (from Hebrew and Aramaic עניים) did become a reference to the Jerusalem church (cf. Rom.15:26; Gal. 2:10), it could have been adopted by any group of Aramaic-speaking Jews who renounced personal property and shared all things in common, as did the Qumran community⁴⁴. It could even have been embraced by Gentile converts who felt the term used for an early community representative of the kind of faith they wished to practise, taking their stance from Matt. 5:3; 6:19-21, 24-33. Did the original "Ebionites" appropriate the name ēbyonim from the Jerusalem community to stress continuity with that community, even if they had very little? We know that later Judaisers were not necessarily Jews: were the Ebionites?. Moreover, it is striking how often Marcion and "Ebion" are mentioned together in patristic texts⁴⁵. It would appear that in

the middle of the second century the Church experienced a serious polarisation of opinion in regard to its relationship with Judaism. This manifested itself on the one hand with the heresy of Marcionism, in which a Judaism-free Gospel was proposed, and on the other with Ebionism, in which Judaism was embraced because it enabled Christians to imitate Christ, a Jew, more completely.

However, it would be going too far to stress doubts about the historical Ebionites being ethnically Jewish, because "Ebionism" became a term that the Church Fathers used liberally to refer to any groups in which Jewish customs were practised⁴⁶. Origen makes a clear equation between the words "Jews" and "Ebionites" (Ἰουδαῖοι Ἐβιωναῖοι: In Lucam xiv.18ff⁴⁷; Contra Celsum v.61). The Church Fathers were, in fact, rather free in their use of all labels concerning Jewishness and Judaisation in the Church. Jerome speaks of iuxta nostros Iudaizantes (in Esa. xi.11-14) and nostrī semiudaei (in Esa. cx.1-3) or even Ebionitae (in Esa. cxvi.20) to refer to Christian millennialists (cf. in Esa. Prol. xviii; in Zech. xiv.9-11; in Zeph. iii.8-9), a category which included Tertullian, Irenaeus, Victorinus, Lactantius and Apollinaris⁴⁸. These were people who, like many Jews, believed that God's holy ones would be physically gathered together in Jerusalem to rule in the time of peace which would last a thousand years. The Church

called Arians "Jews" (Theodoret, Hist. Eccles. iv.22.25⁴⁹). People who behaved like Jews, in any way, practical or ideological, were Jews. Ebionites were, therefore, Jews, and Jewish-Christians were all "Ebionites", unless they defined themselves more precisely. Perhaps, at the beginning, the Ebionites were rather Judaistic, "imitation" Jews, in their attempt to become "christs" (cf. Hippolytus, Ref. omn. haer. vii.34.2). Perhaps they were strongly influenced by a group of Judaizing Jewish-Christians. Perhaps they really were an offshoot of a "circumcision party" that was more widespread than the author of Acts or Paul would have us believe. There is still room for much debate.

The Ebionites possessed some kind of gospel purported to be the Gospel of Matthew (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. iii.11.7), which was originally composed in Hebrew⁵⁰, but whether the Ebionites used this text in its Hebrew form is questionable. Epiphanius quotes from it without mentioning once that he is translating (Pan. xxx.13.1-8; 14:4; 16:5; 22:4). He considered Greek works like the Periodoi Petrou (Pan. xxx.15.1), the Anabathmoi Iakobou (Pan. xxx.16.6-7 cf. Rec. i.33-71) and other books (Pan. xxx.23.1-2) to be Ebionite, which shows that the Hebrew language was not a necessary feature of their scriptures. Was the Pseudo-Clementine literature Ebionite⁵¹? Fitzmyer has shown its similarities with Qumran texts⁵², so that a link between the community responsible for the Qumran literature and the Pseudo-

Clementines is very possible, but were Ebionites as such involved in this, or was Epiphanius calling a group of Jewish-Christians strongly influenced by the descendants of the Qumran sectarians "Ebionite" for want of a better name? It is striking that in Epiphanius alone do we find references to the "Ebionites" vegetarianism, purificatory baths, the obligation to marry, rejection of the Temple and sacrifices, and other characteristics which are found distinctively among the Elchasaites and in the Pseudo-Clementines⁵³. Did Epiphanius get hopelessly confused? Perhaps, rather than thinking of one monolithic movement called "Ebionism", it is better to imagine isolated pockets of Jewish-Christian or Judaistic Christian groups who followed Jewish customs for various reasons and in various ways.

Behind the patristic term "Ebionites" lurk the "Jewish-Christian" groups of modern scholarship, and yet the tendency manifest^{ed} by the Church Fathers to mass these groups together in a precise identifiable heresy needs today to be resisted. Jewish-Christians were not all sectarian Ebionites, strictly speaking. It is by no means the case that they would have defined themselves as sectarian or given themselves a name. Some of the "heretics" described in the third-century Syriac Didascalia Apostolorum are, for example, clearly Jewish-Christians (Didasc. xxiii-xxvi) but their opponents in the "catholic church, holy and perfect" (Didasc. ix) know

of no neat title under which they could be defined and no founding heresiarch who could be denounced; only that they were wrong to observe Jewish praxis: food laws, circumcision of sons and hygiene laws, for example⁵⁴.

Other groups described by the Church Fathers under different titles but with the common attribute as somehow following Jewish customs (or being influenced by "Ebionites") may not be "Jewish-Christian" at all. Frank Williams has pointed out that a "sect" to Epiphanius meant anything from an organised church to a school of thought, or a tendency manifested by some exegetes⁵⁵. He can then speak of "Origenists" when there was no "Origenist" church. Epiphanius says himself that he invented the names "Alogi", "Antidicomarians" and "Collyridians"; he may have done so again in other instances. A name given by Epiphanius to a group does not imply that it was, necessarily, an organised body. Klijn and Reinink suggest that the "Jewish-Christian" Cerinthians, Symmachians, Sampsa^aeans and Ossaeans were largely the product of hearsay and polemic. Cerinthus' alleged association with Jewish-Christianity, they conclude, was an invention to explain why Cerinthus opposed Paul⁵⁶. Likewise, the Symmachians were invented, although Symmachius himself may have been a genuine Ebionite⁵⁷. Groups like the Sampsa^aeans and Ossaeans were considered by Epiphanius to be influenced by Elchasai simply because they lived in the right region, though in fact he knew nothing very much about them⁵⁸. Klijn and Reinink conclude that

historical facts about Jewish-Christian groups are scarce, and that patristic authors tended to copy one another and transfer attributes from one group to the next. It is not necessary to comment upon Klijn and Reinink's excellent analysis in any more detail here, except to add that it appears that Epiphanius tells us more about Elchasaites than any other Jewish-Christian group, mainly because he places their ideas in the hands of Ebionites, Samp^aseans and Ossaeans. However, Elchasaites are not, strictly speaking, Jewish-Christians.

G. P. Luttikhuizen⁵⁹ has concluded that the Elchasaites arose after an Aramaic book of revelation, written in a Parthian Jewish community at the turn of the first century, was adopted almost a hundred years later, in a Greek form, by a Gentile group headed by Alcibiades of Apamea. The book may have been called The Revelation of Elchasai, where "Elchasai" is a Greek transliteration of היל נסאי, Aramaic for "the hidden power/God" (cf. Pan. 19:2:2). He believes that by the time of Alcibiades and the Greek edition this meaning was no longer understood, and people thought it referred to a person. The Elchasaites were therefore influenced by Jewish apocalyptic writings, and possibly by Jewish-Christians, but were not Jewish-Christians themselves⁶⁰.

This serves as an example of how complex the origins of so-called "Jewish-Christian" groups might be. Jewish

influence, Judaistic practices, the use of Jewish or even Jewish-Christian texts all may contribute to the Church Fathers seeing groups as "Ebionite", or relating to the Ebionites, or heretical in a "Jewish" way. Many modern scholars follow suit in labelling them "Jewish-Christian" even if the groups themselves may have been ethnically Gentile. But were all these groups a movement? How helpful is the term "Jewish-Christian" for these sects if it implies some kind of homogeneous theology and superior continuity with the early Jewish church?

There is only one group, among all of those described in patristic literature, which appears to have a good case for being a continuation of an early Jewish-Christian church⁶¹. These were identified by the Church Fathers as the sect of the Nazoraeans, though it should be remembered that this was the usual term for Christians in Syria. Physical isolation cannot be used as a reason to explain their conservatism, since they existed in the city of Beroea, modern Aleppo, and probably Pella, as well as the town of Kochaba, near Damascus (Pan. xxix.7.7, Jerome, De Vir. Ill. iii.1)⁶². As we have seen, Epiphanius thought they were descended from a group that left Jerusalem and went to Pella (Pan. xxix.7.8, xxx.2.8), en route to Syria, perhaps because he perceived that they shared the same name as the primitive community in Jerusalem (Pan. xxix.1.3; xxix.6:2-5), but in fact they could have derived from any early Jewish-Christian community which did not abandon Jewish praxis, like the

others, by the middle of the second century. Theologically, there is nothing that would have distinguished them as being anything but broadly orthodox. According to Epiphanius (Pan. xxix.7.2-5, xxix.9.4), the Nazoraeans used both the Old and New Testaments, including a Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew, believed in the resurrection of the dead, and proclaimed one God and his son Jesus Christ. The only difference between them and the vast majority of other churches was that they maintained Jewish praxis: Hebrew language, circumcision of sons, keeping the Sabbath and so on (cf. Pan. xxix.5.4; xxix.8.1ff). From Jerome's quotations from a Nazoraean interpretation (peshar?) of the prophet Isaiah (in Esa. viii.14,19-22; ix.1-4; xxix.17-21; xxxi.6-9) it appears that, unlike the stereotypical Ebionite sect, they accepted the apostle Paul and were deeply suspicious of the "scribes and Pharisees", the rabbis.

In summary, it would appear that there was the early Jewish Church, Jewish ethnically and religiously with Gentile converts which, after Paul's mission and fierce debate, accepted the Gentiles into the Church without the requirement of accepting the praxis of Judaism. Thereafter, spurred by the ultimatum provided by the temple tax requirement of A.D.96, ethnic Jews in the Church gradually began to fall away from Jewish praxis. By the beginning of the second century, the religion of

the Church was perceived as something other than Judaism. Some members of the Church disagreed with this development and undertook missions to Judaize (and re-Judaize) certain communities. By the middle of the second century, few Jews within the Church continued to maintain the praxis of Judaism, but Jewish interpretational forms, literary genres, traditions and theological conceptions from the earliest Jewish foundations of many communities, especially those in Syria and Egypt, survived to influence later writers. Also in the second century, sectarian groups were defined which sought to preserve or re-introduce Jewish praxis in various ways, combined with various theological positions. The Church Fathers did not have much direct experience of such groups and went on hearsay, thereby amalgamating them into a kind of "Ebionite" coalition. As well as these there were invented heretical groups, formulated by a practice of transferring characteristics of known groups onto other groups in order to flesh out their heretical position. By the fourth century, there was widespread interest in Jewish praxis by Gentile members of the Church and a variety of groups exhibiting "Jewish" characteristics. None of these can be traced back to known early Jewish-Christian groups within the Church with any certainty.

Whether all these very diverse phenomena should be classified within the umbrella term "Jewish-Christianity" is very questionable indeed. There is no doubt that Jewish-Christians, defined as Christian Jews and their

Gentile converts who maintained Jewish praxis, existed throughout the first four centuries of the Christian Church, and indeed, for all we know, for many centuries afterward. Jewish-Christianity was not, however, a multifibrous strand of heterodox sectarianism unravelling from the Jerusalem community via Pella. Jewish-Christian groups probably arose quite independently of the Jerusalem community in various churches which had an ethnically Jewish foundation and considered Christian belief to be entirely consistent with the praxis of Judaism which they had maintained prior to baptism. Other groups were Judaising and Judaistic in various ways. Jewish forms of thought and expression were very predominant in the early Church, and continued to influence later churches to greater or lesser degrees; but Jewish forms of thought and expression, as far as they can be identified, are not indicative of the existence of Jewish-Christians as such. There was no recognisable peculiar theology to link all the groups that have been called "Jewish-Christian" together, and at least one group, the Nazoraeans, appear to have been within the bounds of orthodox belief. Their distinguishing mark was the maintenance of Jewish praxis, and only this.

If Jewish-Christians are defined by praxis and not by theology, then the search for archaeological evidence of Jewish-Christian groups becomes extremely difficult.

One would need to find a clear indication that Jewish praxis was continued, combined with clear evidence of Christian belief.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BAGATTI-TESTA SCHOOL AND "JEWISH-CHRISTIAN ARCHAEOLOGY" IN PALESTINE

Bagatti and Testa have not concerned themselves with any serious attempt to find evidence of sustained Jewish praxis among Christian archaeological remains in Palestine. For them Jewish-Christians are defined primarily as Christians of Jewish race. While it is taken for granted that these people maintained Jewish praxis, what has been of great concern to the Bagatti-Testa school is to demonstrate that many of the archaeological artefacts indicate that the community responsible for them adhered to a heterodox "Jewish-Christian" theology. In his preface to F. Manns' bibliography on Jewish-Christianity¹, Bagatti claims to base his own views about the Jewish-Christians on the "contexte humain des premiers chrétiens" and a desire to avoid anachronism, for archaeology itself "constitue la source essentielle de notre connaissance du judéo-christianisme" and "il est possible aujourd'hui de se faire une idée plus exacte des judéo-chrétiens de Palestine". He asserts that the excavations of sites such as Nazareth and Capernaum down to levels before the fourth century have exposed the cult, liturgical objects and inscriptions of the Jewish-Christians who lived in these places, so that we can now better determine "éléments de leur pensée théologique"².

In defining this theological thought, Bagatti makes extensive use of apocryphal literature which, like Daniélou, he ascribes to Jewish-Christians. Without this initial identification of the literature as Jewish-Christian, Bagatti has nothing on which to base his ideas about the nature of the archaeology. Furthermore, Bagatti can speak of "des premiers chrétiens", "pre-constantinienne" Christians and Jewish-Christians as if there is no question that these must be one and the same uniform group; he is apparently unaware of the questions of continuity between the earliest Jewish-Christian communities of Palestine and later manifestations of Jewish-Christianity, so-called, or the great diversity probable within the early Church as a whole.

Despite many references to patristic and apocryphal texts, the Bagatti-Testa school is highly selective in what it uses from the field of Jewish-Christian scholarship. Its attitude to historical studies tends to be aloof. This is perhaps in keeping with its origins within the discipline of archaeology rather than history. The Bagatti-Testa school of "Jewish-Christian" archaeology is in fact a prodigal child of Biblical archaeology in Palestine and the Roman school of Christian archaeology. In tracing the development of these two scholarly trends, the methodological and conceptual framework of the Bagatti-Testa school may be better understood.

Biblical archaeology as such began in the nineteenth century when numerous European archaeologists (Flinders Petrie, Charles Clermont-Ganneau, Ernst Sellin, R. A. S. Macalister, for example) came to Palestine with an interest in finding material that would in some way illuminate the Bible. Western archaeological societies were founded with the purpose of digging up artefacts from the land of the Bible. The Palestine Exploration Fund, founded in 1865, was presided over by the Archbishop of York (and now the Archbishop of Canterbury). When it was established, it was understood that one of its leading aims would be to contribute to "the elucidation of Biblical problems"³. The motivations of the American Palestine Exploration Society, founded 1870, the Deutsche Palästina-Verein, and other societies from Western countries were essentially the same⁴. The legacy of these foundations continues to a greater or lesser extent in the archaeological organisations which exist today in Israel and Jordan.

Perhaps more significant a factor in the origins of the Bagatti-Testa school, however, is its connection with the Roman school of Christian archaeology. The Jerusalem Franciscans have strong links with the Vatican and are Italian in character. They are keenly interested in archaeological developments in Christian Rome and participate in the mainstream of Roman Christian archaeology today, with its scholarly publication Rivista di Archaeologia cristiana. Unlike other Western

societies, the Franciscans have been deeply entrenched in the Holy Land since Pope Clement VI entrusted them with the custody of Christian holy places in Palestine in the papal bullae Gratias agimus and Nuper carissime of November 21, 1342⁵. Six centuries later, in 1923, following the example of other Western groups, they founded the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, in which Biblical and archaeological studies were to be combined. The Franciscan Printing Press had already been established in 1847. At the outset, the Custody of the Holy Land was particularly interested in the Christian sites it owned. Archaeologists educated in Rome were the founders of the programme of excavations.

The Roman school of Christian archaeology can possibly be traced back to Antonio Bosio, who in 1632 published a work, Roma sotteranea, on the Roman catacombs then known⁶, although the two main founders of the school were Giuseppe Marchi and Giovanni B. de Rossi, who worked in the nineteenth century⁷. The classic work which outlines the results of the school's work is undoubtedly the Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie edited by F. Cabrol and H. Leclercq⁸ (Paris, 1924-1953), which will not be superseded as the most comprehensive reference work on early Christian art and archaeology for many years to come.

Despite the monumental achievements of the school, its methodology is such that it has recently been subject

to heavy criticism. Graydon Snyder has pointed out that it presupposes a continuity of tradition, which has led scholars to assign archaeological evidence to earlier centuries than might be appropriate. Furthermore, the Roman school stressed the importance of first relating the subject to Biblical and patristic literature to ground it in a literary milieu, which might appear to be sound methodology, but in practice this meant that archaeological data were used to supplement the Roman tradition of the development of the Church^s. Scholars have become increasingly doubtful about the manner in which archaeological evidence has been used. The errors of methodology parallel those of the nineteenth-century Biblical archaeologists who wished to "prove the Bible true" by science; the science of archaeology, the physical remains of Palestine, would illuminate the theological world of the Bible. However, science's virtue as a discipline has always been, ostensibly, its determination to be empirically objective, so that the truth of the nature of a physical object or phenomenon is tested by experiments which require the fullest awareness of all contingencies. In seeking to endorse Biblical or ecclesiastical tradition, both the early Biblical archaeologists and the proponents of the Roman school of Christian archaeology fell into precisely the same methodological trap.

The Bagatti-Testa school may be seen to use the Roman school's methodology, with a slight twist. They

too are fastidious in relating archaeological material to evidence found in Biblical and patristic writings, but instead of using the archaeological evidence to bolster the orthodox ecclesiastical tradition, they use it to support an hypothesis of their own, based on an understanding of Jewish-Christianity gleaned from a select body of literary material⁹. The same methodology is used, but with quite different results. Every literary source at their disposal is employed to support a definition of the archaeological evidence as being Jewish-Christian in character. On account of their understanding of an homogeneous Jewish-Christian tradition, they too are able to date material very early. It may be noted that Snyder uses the example of Testa himself to make his point about the dangers of using the Roman school's methodology:

To be sure, there are still some scholars who insist on harmonizing the literary tradition with the archaeological data, or more pointedly, producing archaeological data that will confirm presupposed traditions. One thinks here of P. E. Testa on the presence of the cross in early Palestinian remains ... ¹⁰

As Roland de Vaux has stressed, literary and archaeological material must be evaluated separately and used together to reconstruct history¹¹. Any approach which at its outset seeks to prove a view of history by archaeology is biased and prone to produce tendentious results. Today, we are more aware of the difference between popular religion and the literature of the

theologians. This insight is in great part the result of the work of the Bonn school, which stands over against the Roman school in its approach to early Christian archaeology. Founded by Hans Lietzmann and Franz Joseph Dölger, the approach of the Bonn school is to try to understand early Christian remains in terms of the context of the Mediterranean world, with Christianity seen as a Volk^sreligion. The results of this approach may be seen in the Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum (Stuttgart, 1950-) and the Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum¹². When looking at sites in Palestine, particularly early pilgrim centres, it may then be necessary to consider the popular "folkish" side of the Christian religion and allow symbols to remain ambiguous, or representative of a current popular iconography that has not been recorded in accounts of Church writers, whether orthodox or heterodox, that have been preserved. The orthodox ecclesiastical tradition which sees the Church, pure in faith, beset by heresies and successfully fighting them, cannot be used exclusively in assessing the types of Christianity manifest in many of the early levels of Christian holy places. An unusual symbol does not by necessity indicate the existence of a heterodox mind, let alone a sectarian group, but perhaps a popular faith in which certain pre-Christian elements have been preserved. One might also need to consider the context of archaeological data not only in terms of the Mediterranean world, but more closely in terms of

Palestine, and consider the demography of the country and the influence of different religions in the land.

As an example of how the Bagatti-Testa school has used its methodology to argue for the identification of a body of archaeological material as being specifically Jewish-Christian, the case of the ossuaries immediately presents itself. The roots of its identification of certain ossuaries are to be found in the nineteenth century. It was of some concern to biblical archaeologists at this time that while important Old Testament sites were being identified in many places, where interesting artefacts were coming to light, no evidence of first-century Christianity was found. Then, in 1873, Charles Clermont-Ganneau claimed that a collection of ossuaries discovered in a tomb on the Mount of Offence might now show evidence of the earliest Jewish-Christian fraternity of Jerusalem. There were thirty mainly Aramaic inscriptions scratched on a cache of about thirty ossuaries, and eight of these were thought by Clermont-Ganneau to be indicative of Christians, since there were names found in the New Testament: Judah, Salome and Jesus, for example (see Figures 1 and 2). He was equally convinced of their Christian character by the rough crosses and symbols reminiscent of crosses incised close to their names¹³. There was also a clearly carved Latin cross with the Greek name $\text{H}\delta\eta\chi\alpha$ (Figure 2.3,4).

Over the next century, much speculation ensued about ossuary use and burial customs. The early view was that first- and second-century ethnically Jewish Christians found a resting place in their Jewish family graves, their new faith being indicated only by a rough cross¹⁴. A little ironically, it was a later Israeli scholar, E. L. Sukenik, who made the strongest case for certain ossuaries being "Jewish-Christian"¹⁵. Sukenik excavated a first-century tomb in Talpiot, west of Jerusalem, in September 1945 and concluded that two inscriptions, $\Gamma\text{In}\sigma\upsilon\varsigma$ ΓIou (Figure 3.1) and $\Gamma\text{In}\sigma\upsilon\varsigma$ $\alpha\lambda\omega\theta$ (Figure 3.2) represented lamentations over the crucifixion of Jesus by some of his disciples. ΓIou he translated as "woe" and in $\alpha\lambda\omega\theta$ he saw the Semitic root הלח , "to wail"¹⁶. Crosses on another ossuary, he thought, "were placed there with some definite purpose"¹⁷. As comparative material for the early employment of the cross as a Christian symbol he pointed to the Casa del Bicentenario in Herculaneum, where a shape something like a Latin cross is cut in the plaster of a back wall¹⁸.

However, already in 1946, Carl H. Kraeling had the sobering realisation that the "crosses" of Pompeii and Herculaneum were not evidence of Christians, but were the result of wooden wall brackets which had since decomposed¹⁹. He was also one of the first to point out that the names in the ossuaries, so like those of the people found in the New Testament, were extremely common in the first century, as was the name Jesus itself²⁰. A

cursory survey of the names found in Josephus' works confirms this impression.

The clearly carved Latin cross with the Greek name in Clermont-Ganneau's cache probably comes from the Byzantine period, drawn by a Christian hand. The cave in which the ossuaries were found was not their original resting-place. It was a rock-hewn chamber without loculi and looked to Clermont-Ganneau as if it was a storehouse for ossuaries brought from other tombs. The ossuaries were piled up one on top of the other in a disorderly fashion, so that their lids did not match, and bones were randomly placed with vases and other debris²¹.

Over the past thirty years Clermont-Ganneau and Sukenik have been proved wrong. Even Bagatti saw that Sukenik's 'Ιησους'Ιου was a misreading of the graffito, which should be read 'Ιησους'Ιουδ(ο)υ, Jesus, (son) of Judah²². The word αλωθ is not a lament, but probably a name transcribing Hebrew יהלול²³. Furthermore, the purpose of the cross marks and other symbols was without doubt to show which way around the lid should be placed on the ossuary box²⁴. As Pau Figueras writes:

... not only prudence, but scholarly objectivity should restrain us from forcing a Christian interpretation where a Jewish one is acceptable. This is not an a priori position as we know ... that secondary burial and the use of ossuaries were the norm among Palestinian Jews during this period.²⁵

Figueras is in this case arguing not so much against Sukenik but against Bagatti, for ten years after Sukenik published his findings at Talpiot, Bagatti, with J. T.

Milik, proposed that another cache of Jewish-Christian ossuaries had been discovered.

Bagatti had been interested in uncovering early Christian remains in Jordan²⁶ and Israel²⁷ for some years. In 1953, when workmen by chance discovered a Jewish cemetery in the Franciscan Dominus Flevit property, he was given the task of making an archaeological examination of the site. For precisely the same reasons as Clermont-Ganneau, Bagatti identified ossuaries in the first and second century kokhim tombs as being Jewish-Christian²⁸. He admitted that the majority of signs scratched on the sides and lids of the ossuaries were for practical purposes, so that the lid would be placed the right way around, but he remained convinced that the cross shapes had religious significance. He believed these crosses were instances of the ancient Hebrew letter tau, which was written as + or X . This, he claimed, was a Jewish-Christian symbol²⁹.

Bagatti summarises his understanding of Church history in the excavation report³⁰ and it is helpful to review this in order to comprehend why he fought against the developing scholarly consensus about the Jewish (and possibly exclusively Pharisaic) use of ossuaries. The key component in his historical summary is a stress on the numbers of converts in the Acts of the Apostles. He notes that in the early period, there were many "cristiani di razza ebraica"; he takes the numbers

converted in Acts 2:41 (3000) and Acts 4:4 (5000) literally, and uses Eusebius to support his view (Hist. Eccles. iii.33, 35). To Bagatti's mind there simply had to be some archaeological record of this vast movement.

While Bagatti enjoyed some initial support during the 1960s, his hypothesis on the ossuaries is now almost entirely discredited. Antonio Ferrua, who was among those critical of his approach, responded to his preliminary reports by noting that it would have been better to fix the religious nature of the tomb and then to deduce the cryptography, rather than to argue for the presence of Christianity on the basis of cryptic symbols³¹. Michael Avi-Yonah took issue with Bagatti's assumptions about the numbers of converts and maintained that the chances of finding tombs of the tiny minority of Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem were exceedingly slim³². Even if the reading of the letter tau were to be credited with some validity, the rare symbolic value of the Hebrew letter is based on Ezekiel 9:4, where the elect of God are marked with this sign; it could therefore have been the property of innumerable sects, which existed in Judaea at the end of the Second Temple period, who claimed to be the elect. Furthermore, we do not have to look so far as these sects. Avi-Yonah did not point out that there is good evidence for the importance of the Hebrew tau, written like a Greek chi, in the rabbinic tradition (b. Shab. 55a; b. Men. 74b cf. b. Ker. 5b). Avi-Yonah did note, however, that Bagatti's reasoning was

itself faulty in using the invalid syllogism:

The tau is a Jewish symbol
The early Christians were Jews
ergo: The tau is a Christian symbol³³

The names of a Christian character are, as has been stated already, ordinary Jewish names of the first and second centuries A.D. Avi-Yonah pointed out that no specifically Christian onomasticon existed before the latter part of the third century A.D., when Gentiles in Egypt appear to have taken names from the Old and New Testaments upon baptism³⁴.

Another matter was the problem of what appeared to be a chi-rho monogram drawn on ossuary no.12 at Dominus Flevit, which belonged to "Judah the son of Judah the proselyte"³⁵. It was this sign that provided a key reason for Bagatti to identify the whole of Chamber 79 at Dominus Flevit as Jewish-Christian³⁶ and yet it is very doubtful that this sign should be considered Christian, since it was in use in the ancient world long before Constantine adopted it as a symbol heralding Christianity. Figueras notes that here the chi-rho may be short for $\chi\rho\acute{\alpha}\kappa\rho\epsilon\omicron\nu$ or $\chi\rho\acute{\alpha}\sigma\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\varsigma$ ³⁷, but it could have been an abbreviation for any word, or name, with a Greek chi and ρ rho prominent within it. This certainly explains the chi-rho recently found in an inscription from a synagogue in Sepphoris³⁸. It is axiomatic that a chi-rho found in a Jewish setting should be interpreted in the light of its Jewish context. It would not appear

to be methodologically sound to interpret it in the light of a much later, religiously alien, symbol.

The case of the Dominus Flevit ossuaries demonstrates the manner in which Bagatti and, soon after him, Testa, would approach a wide variety of archaeological data. An important feature of Bagatti's aim was to find on the ossuaries definite symbols which might illuminate the thought of the "Jewish-Christian" church of Judaea, which he was sure existed from the first to the fourth century. It was Bagatti's firm belief that such a church ~~existed and~~ must have left some material evidence. The perceived symbols were the way into the minds of these Jewish-Christians, but even more they were the earliest evidence of Christian iconography itself³⁹. With his interest in signs and symbols, Bagatti can be seen to stand in some succession to another tradition of European scholarship, that of the iconographers who hoped to decipher the symbols of the ancient world⁴⁰. Here again one meets Daniélou, for Daniélou himself stood in this tradition⁴¹. Bagatti was indebted to Daniélou for many primary identifications of so-called Jewish-Christian symbols, but Bagatti and Daniélou soon became mutually influenced by the other. Daniélou's Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme (Paris, 1958) provided Bagatti with the foundations upon which he could build a grander hypothesis. Daniélou, on the other hand, sought justifications for his notions of a specific



Jewish-Christian theology by appealing to Bagatti's work, for example the ossuary scratchings. In Les Symboles Chrétiens Primitifs (Paris, 1961), Daniélou lauds Bagatti with praise over his discoveries of "un certain nombre d'ossuaires ... dont le caractère judéo-chrétien est certain"⁴². Daniélou continued to reserve high praise for the work of the Bagatti-Testa school in many reports⁴³, maintaining as little regard for voices which challenged its results as the Bagatti-Testa school maintained toward critics of Daniélou.

A further example of how alleged Jewish-Christian remains began to proliferate on slender and contentious evidence, by means of an approach that was prone to make erroneous assessments by its very nature, may be seen in the case of the Khirbet Kilkish funerary steles. Ignazio Mancini, in his review of Jewish-Christian archaeology in Palestine, provides a compact outline of the steles' discovery which will not be repeated here⁴⁴. It will suffice to note that in 1960 a quantity of inscribed stone steles were brought to the attention of Augustus Spijkerman, then director of the Museum at the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, by an antiquities dealer on the Via Dolorosa who later showed Spijkerman the freshly ploughed field in Khirbet Kilkish, near Hebron, from which the objects originated. Excavation of the field eventually uncovered over 200 of these steles (which Bagatti thought were stone amulets) within a metre of the surface of the ground (see Figure 4 for examples).

Curiously, the steles bear some resemblance to the steles of the Shapira fraud, which may be seen in the basement of the Palestine Exploration Fund in London (Photos 1 and 2) and to objects shown to the present director of the Museum, Michele Piccirillo, in Jordan, which he confirms are of recent local production⁴⁵ (Photos 3 and 4). In fact, it is unnecessary to publish a detailed refutation of the Khirbet Kilkish steles' claims to archaeological authenticity, for a trained eye will see that the inscriptions are relatively fresh and the stone unhurt by the ravages of time. The location of the steles just below the surface of a ploughed field, which was equipped with a hoard of diverse Roman sherds, along with the very probable conspiracy of the antiquities dealer and the land owner, all seem to indicate rather strongly that the Franciscans were in this case shamefully conned. Piccirillo has accordingly removed all but two of these steles from display in the Museum⁴⁶. However, the iconography of the steles has formed a basis for E. Testa's extensive discussion of Jewish-Christian symbolism in Il Simbolismo dei Giudeo-Cristiani (Jerusalem, 1962), from which many conclusions were drawn about the details of Jewish-Christian theology.

Bagatti believed that Hebron was the centre of a fourth-century sect, the so-called Archontics, described by Epiphanius (Pan. xl, xli)⁴⁷, which may be, but Epiphanius nowhere indicates that the Archontics were a

Jewish-Christian sect. Rather, it is quite clear from his description that they were Gnostics. For example, they believed in seven heavens each presided over by an archon, at the top of which, in an eighth, was the shining Mother (Pan. xl.2.3); they believed in the resurrection of the soul, but not of the flesh, and rejected Christian baptism (Pan. xl.2.4-9). They were found in Palestine in ^aplace named by Epiphanius as Καφαρβαρίχα (Pan. xl.1.3), three miles from Hebron, which Bagatti identifies with Bene Naim⁴⁸. Epiphanius says that a certain Peter, the originator of the sect, was expelled by Bishop Aetius, and fled to Kochaba, which Epiphanius considered to be a centre for Ebionites and Nazoraeans (Pan. xl.1.5), but he was clearly not an Ebionite or a Nazoraean. He returned to Kaphar Baricha as an old man and, having told certain people about his views, he was anathematized by no less a person than Epiphanius himself, after which Peter became a hermit in a cave where he would receive a few devotees (Pan. xl.1.6-9). Peter does not appear to have had any interest in Jewish praxis, and the ideas of the Archontics are quite unlike those that Epiphanius associated with his Ebionites (Elchasaites?). The closest group to the Archontics were the Sethians. Both groups used the Ascension of Isaiah and believed in the power of Seth (Pan. xl.6.9-7.5 cf. xxxix.1.3-2.7), son of Adam and Eve. H. C. Puech accordingly sees the Archontics as nothing more than a ramification of the Sethians⁴⁹. Seth is also

found in Jewish haggadic material, which was a source of ideas for both Gnostic and catholic Christians but, as Klijn has noted, we should not come to hasty conclusions about the origins of Gnostic groups simply because haggadic elements are present in Gnostic treatises⁵⁰. Seth was an attractive figure capable of a variety of interpretations. The Bagatti-Testa school has made an error in identifying the Archontics as Jewish-Christians. The steles were interpreted by Testa in the light of Archontic theology, which was then considered to be representative of Jewish-Christian theology. His extensive study on the steles then formed the foundation for subsequent analyses of possible Jewish-Christian material found in holy sites in Palestine. However, since the steles are generally regarded as being fraudulent⁵¹, and the identification of the Archontics as Jewish-Christians is erroneous, it is not too strong to say that Testa's work based on the steles is entirely valueless in illuminating the symbolism or the possible theology of Jewish-Christians. Any analysis of possible Jewish-Christian remains which relies on Testa's conclusions about the Khirbet Kilkish material is also invalidated.

By the middle of the 1960s, Bagatti and Testa had assembled a large body of archaeological data that was considered by them to be Jewish-Christian in nature. Already in 1955, Bagatti had begun work on excavating a

section of ancient Nazareth on land belonging to the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, and had soon developed the theory that it had been a Jewish-Christian cult centre prior to the fourth century⁵². Testa argued that sacred rites of baptism were administered in the main caves there, the "mystic grottos"⁵³. Unlike in the case of Dominus Flevit, the judgements passed on Nazareth by Bagatti and Testa have not yet been assessed in detail. It is now no simple task to examine the site, as it has been covered over by the erection of the Basilica of the Annunciation, which has turned the caves into parts of the church, used for worship. Other important remains are accessible to visitors only with the permission of the authorities there.

It would appear that the conclusions reached by Bagatti and Testa influenced the work of Virgilio Corbo, Stanislao Loffreda and Augustus Spijkerman in their excavations in Capernaum, which began in 1968. While a four volume report of the excavations was produced on the basis of results from nine campaigns⁵⁴, work still continues at the Franciscan part of the site, although the area of a Byzantine octagonal church is now being enclosed in a large church which, like that in Nazareth, will incorporate the archaeological evidence into its design. Corbo argued that under the octagonal church there was a house-church belonging to the Jewish-Christian community of Capernaum, which in turn was created out of the original house of Peter, the apostle.

Therefore, yet another important Christian holy site was alleged to have been the property of Jewish-Christians. A number of Franciscan scholars joined with Bagatti and Testa in supporting the idea that at Nazareth and Capernaum, as well as in many other places, Jewish-Christians preserved the memory of important sites in Jesus' life⁵⁵. None of these writers shows any real interest at all in scholarship about the Jewish-Christians, save from the work of Daniélou. Recently, Igino Grego has published a study which gives the Bagatti-Testa school's view of patristic writings concerned with Jewish-Christians and Judaisers⁵⁶ and yet he completely ignores the important source critical work of Klijn and Reinink. The impetus of the speculations which characterised the school's work in the 1960s and early 1970s has, however, slowed down. Bagatti has ~~in the~~ concentrated on later Christian iconography⁵⁷, though Testa continues to produce some articles on Jewish-Christians⁵⁸. In the meantime, the guidebooks to the Franciscan holy places deliver the main theories of the school to the public as if they were the unquestionable truth, widely supported by the archaeological community⁵⁹.

It would be unfair to say, however, that the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis is unsupported by anyone outside the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Gaalyah Cornfeld, in a book surveying the archaeology of both the Old and New

Testaments⁶⁰, reported many of the identifications made by the Bagatti-Testa school without suggesting any other views. Readers of the book learnt that a baptismal font had been found under the Church of St. Joseph in Nazareth which was used by Jewish-Christians for mystic initiation rites of neophytes⁶¹ and that the archaeological discoveries in Nazareth at the traditional site of the annunciation indicated a Jewish-Christian cult of Mary⁶². Cornfeld in fact provides a helpful survey of the main assertions of the Bagatti-Testa school. For example, it is stated that: (i) the early Jewish-Christians venerated sites such as Nazareth, Bethany, Tomb of the Virgin, the site of Golgotha and other places and that these were "rediscovered" by the official Church during the era of Constantine⁶³; (ii) a cave in Bethany was venerated by Jewish-Christians and was abandoned about the fifth century when the Jewish-Christian communities of Palestine disappeared⁶⁴, (iii) a synagogue-church existed on Mount Zion on the site of the upper room where Jesus celebrated the Passover⁶⁵, (iv) a mystic grotto existed in Bethlehem, venerated by Jewish-Christians, which commemorated the descent and ascent of Christ and his initiated ones, as well as Mary's virginity and her bringing forth the Christ child⁶⁶; (v) graffiti scratched on walls of tombs and ossuaries (for example, in Dominus Flevit) are signs and symbols used by Jewish-Christians to express their religious beliefs and initiation rites⁶⁷, (vi) various amulets are Jewish-

Christian⁶⁶; (vii) in most parts of Palestine, mainly in the mountains, the Church of the Circumcision (the Jewish-Christian church) led an active life until the end of the fourth century and continued on in a state of decline for at least another century⁶⁷. Cornfeld's book was a popular one, and has helped to disseminate the ideas of the school to a wide audience.

Also helpful in this regard has been Archaeology, The Rabbis and Early Christianity (London, 1981), by E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, who accepted Bagatti's views concerning Nazareth and wrote of the existence of a Jewish-Christian synagogue there⁷⁰. Meyers and Strange are slightly more critical of the Bagatti-Testa school's hypothesis⁷¹ and are willing to place a question mark over Testa's identification of "baths" at Nazareth as Jewish-Christian baptisteries⁷². However, they found it significant that so many early Christian churches were built over small caves and used the Bagatti-Testa school's hypothesis to explain this phenomenon; the theory being that these were sites in which Jewish-Christians worshipped⁷³. They also accepted that the excavations under the fifth-century octagonal church of Capernaum indicate that a house-church may have existed there prior to the fourth century⁷⁴.

Meyers has argued for an appreciation of the Bagatti-Testa school in a recent article for the Biblical Archaeologist (a journal of which he is editor)⁷⁵. It

would appear that Meyers credits the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis with validity mainly because he cannot imagine that all the early Jewish followers of Jesus left Palestine, or that there was "tremendous new immigration to Palestine by Christians in the third through fifth centuries"⁷⁶. Meyers therefore shows no awareness of the Christian communities that are known to have existed all over the province which would have absorbed early Christian communities in Palestine. He is also quite unaware, it seems, of the pressure exerted by Christian emperors to make their subjects convert to Christianity or of the missionary movements which swept through Palestine with the rise of monasticism late in the fourth century and in the fifth. Like Bagatti, Meyers simply believes that Jewish-Christians must have existed past the first century and if they existed, then there must be some archaeological record of their existence.

Strange too has argued separately that Nazareth, Capernaum, the cave at Bethany and certain amulets demonstrate a Jewish-Christian presence in Palestine⁷⁷. This is based on an historical model for which there is no real evidence; Strange writes:

it is surely the case that first it was isolated Christian villages, even Jewish-Christian, that emerged in a network of Jewish villages. Such isolated localities are more likely to have developed local traditions not well-known elsewhere.⁷⁸

This is precisely Testa's point⁷⁹, and one which gives him the freedom to interpret finds in accordance with his

own imagination. One need only identify a site as "isolated" to provide a justification for interpreting the finds there without recourse to their parallels in the wider Roman world, since these finds would have to be considered fundamentally from their peculiar local perspective. However, far from allowing mysterious signs and symbols, perhaps indicative of a local tradition, to remain inaccessible, these are interpreted by the Bagatti-Testa school in accordance with a grand schema which outlines the basic theological beliefs of a supposedly homogeneous group of Jewish-Christians which were, apparently, numerous in pre-Byzantine Palestine.

It can be seen from this brief survey of the origins, work and influence of the Bagatti-Testa school that its methodology may be inadequate in assessing the finds made at Christian holy places. It has already been known to have made errors of judgement in regard to archaeological material, but the ideas of the school are widely available, especially at a popular level, to visitors to Christian holy sites and through the Franciscan Printing Press. Certain archaeologists who seem to be not wholly conversant with the known development of Christianity in Palestine, have found the identifications of material by the Bagatti-Testa school to be particularly convincing and have publicised these.

In order to clarify the historical and demographical background of Palestine, so that Jewish-Christians might

be properly placed geographically, and so that the general history of the region in particular regard to holy places might be better understood, the following two chapters will examine relevant historical issues. Using both literary and archaeological data a context will be established in which religious finds may be placed. In Chapter Three, the various ethnic groups known in Palestine in the third century, along with the important spiritual centres of these groups, will be surveyed. Leaving aside the body of archaeological evidence assigned to Jewish-Christians by the Bagatti-Testa school, the context of this hypothetical group in Palestine will be reviewed and literary evidence which has been used to argue for the existence of Jewish-Christian groups in the area will be examined. Possible archaeological evidence for Jewish-Christians not considered by the Bagatti-Testa school will also be noted. In this examination, there will be an eye to Christian holy places, for it will be seen from archaeological and literary evidence that pagan cult centres were rife throughout the country. In Chapter Four, the great changes wrought by the Emperor Constantine in Palestine will be discussed, and the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage explored, in order to establish an historical context for fourth-century finds. By means of these chapters, the origins of Christian holy places will be, it is hoped, better understood. It will

be argued that there is little room for Jewish-Christian involvement in the historical processes at work.

PART TWO: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CHAPTER THREE

THE PEOPLE AND RELIGIONS OF PALESTINE

IN THE THIRD CENTURY A.D.

As it was argued in Chapter One, facts about Jewish-Christians are scant. According to Klijn and Reinink, only four groups can be included in the category: (i) groups of "Ebionites", described by Irenaeus, who lived somewhere in the Graeco-Roman world; (ii) some "Ebionites" found by Origen in Egypt; (iii) Nazoraeans, described by Epiphanius and Jerome, who lived in Syria; and (iv) a community from which came the "Ebionite" writings known to Epiphanius¹. In fact, Jewish-Christians appear to have been a widely-spread phenomenon, though it does not appear from the little evidence we have that they were particularly numerous past the middle of the second century. There were a number of groups which seemed to be in some way "Jewish", like the Cerinthians, Symmachians, Elchasaites, Sampsaeans and those who professed millenarian beliefs, but these will not be considered here to be Jewish-Christians proper. Jewish-Christians, adequately defined, maintained Jewish praxis. One might, of course, then expect to find them mentioned as being close to known Jewish communities, both in Palestine and the Diaspora. This is never the case. None of the patristic sources places Jewish-Christian groups in Palestine. The

closest groups to Palestine were the Nazoraeans and "Ebionites" found in Syria.

To compensate for this complete lack of evidence for Jewish-Christians in Palestine, the Bagatti-Testa school has claimed that the evidence is not to be found in patristic sources but in rabbinic literature. According to Bagatti and Testa, the minim against whom the rabbis reserved resounding condemnation were Jewish-Christians.

This chapter then begins by looking at rabbinic passages concerning the minim to see if any of the information there might suggest the presence of Jewish-Christians in Galilee. Possible Jewish-Christian archaeological evidence not discussed by the Bagatti-Testa school will also be reviewed. The impression gained from the Church Fathers that there were no Jewish-Christians in Palestine (worth mentioning) will, it is expected, be confirmed. From this point the populations who certainly did occupy Palestine in the third and early fourth century will be examined in order to determine a proper context for archaeological finds. This survey will also be important as background to understanding the changes that took place in the fourth century when the country began to be Christianised and is essential for a full appreciation of the beginnings of Christian holy places in Palestine.

MINIM

Rabbinic sources mention four specific places in Galilee in which minim were present: Diocaesarea/Sepphoris (t.Hull. 2.24), Kefar Sikhnin/Samma (t.Hull. 2.22, b.A.Z. 16b-17a; 27b), nearby Kefar Neburaya (Qoh. Rab. 7.26) and Capernaum (Qoh. Rab. 1.8).

To take the last first, it may be noted that Stanislao Loffreda, in his most recent guidebook to Capernaum, writes: "From the context it is clear that those Minim of Capernaum were Jews converted to Christianity, i.e. Jewish Christians"². Loffreda then quotes the story of Hanina, the nephew of Rabbi Joshua, who was apparently put under a spell by minim in Capernaum and made to transgress the Sabbath by riding an ass. Hanina then goes to Rabbi Joshua who, after anointing his nephew with oil to heal him, says: "Since the ass of that wicked one has roused itself against you, you cannot remain in the land of Israel any longer". Hanina duly goes to Babylon. Loffreda gratuitously informs us that the "wicked one" is Jesus, when the reference is quite clearly to Balaam. "The ass of Balaam" **הַחֲזֹנֶת - בְּלָעָם** is a standard epithet in rabbinic Judaism. Balaam was the Gentile accuser of Israel (Num. 22-24) whose ass saw the angel of the Lord on the road before Balaam was able to do so (Num. 23:21-35). Balaam in rabbinic literature mouths blasphemous arguments in general, but never specifically Christian

ones³. The "ass of Balaam" also appears in the New Testament, in 2 Peter 2:15-16: "Forsaking the right way they have gone astray; they have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Be'or, who loved gain from wrongdoing, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a dumb ass spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness." Rabbi Issi's explanation of this story, that Hanina is good and the people of Capernaum evil (Qoh. Rab. 7.26), would prima facie indicate that the story was understood as a conflict between a righteous man of God and wicked people (for whom the symbol was Balaam) hostile to rabbinic Jews. This tells us that the Capernaum population were viewed with disdain by the rabbis, but it does not tell us why.

For the Bagatti-Testa school, the term "minim" refers to Jewish-Christians, but this is an identification that has long been superseded⁴. Indeed Jerome states that the "Pharisees" call the "Nazarei" "Minaei" (Ep. cxii.13) but the information provided is far from self-evident. While Jerome's anachronistic use of the word "Pharisees" probably refers to the rabbis, it is to be remembered that the Hebrew word נוצרים, transliterated by Jerome to imply that a Jewish-Christian sect, the Nazoraeans, is intended, was used by Jews to refer to all Christians. Jerome is aware of this himself, for he mentions that the Jews curse Christians three times a day sub nomine Nazarenorum (in Amos i.1.11f, cf.

in Esa. ii.5.19; xiii.49.7; xiv.52.4-6). Jerome may have mistaken the rabbis' use of the term נוצרים as a reference to a Jewish-Christian sect when it referred to all Christians of the late fourth century, or else he may be saying that the Nazoraeans of Syria were indeed referred to as minim by the rabbis. If the first possibility is the case, then the concept of minut had become very broad. If the second is correct, it demonstrates only that a Jewish-Christian sect was included in the rabbis' category of minut. In no way does Jerome say that minim are to be identified as Nos^urim. The Nos^urim are a subset of the minim but should not be equated with them.

The word מינים is derived from מין, meaning "kind, species" (cf. Gen. 1:12 למינהו "according to its kind"⁵). One of the most enlightening passages for the rabbinic use of the word is in the Babylonian Talmud, tractate Rosh ha-Shanah 17a, where it is said that minim "have deviated from the communal norms". Minim were therefore a species of Jews (or even Christian Gentiles) who did not accept the norms of the group to which they belonged (cf. b.A.Z. 65a).

Much debate about the identity of the minim has focussed on the Birkat ha-Minim in the Eighteen Benedictions, part of the daily Amidah. The text of this was supposedly written by Rabbi Samuel ha-Katan and approved by Rabban Gamaliel II in the last decades of the first century A.D. (b.Ber. 28b). The scope of the

reference is not easy to determine. In its early form it may have been a curse against the Nos^urim rather than all the minim. William Horbury points out that Justin (Dial. xvi, xciii, xcvi, cxiii, cxxiii, cxxxiii) and Tertullian (Adv. Marc. iv.8.1) believed that the curse applied to Christians⁶, which would indicate that the word Nos^urim was found in the curse by the middle of the second century, when Justin wrote, and that Justin and Tertullian understood the word Nos^urim to refer to Christians as a whole and not just the Nazoraean sect (as Epiphanius thought, cf. Pan. xxix.9). The word Nos^urim is found in two texts of the old Palestinian rite in the Cairo Genizah, but scholars have recently begun to doubt the antiquity of this evidence, the originality of which was advocated by Strack⁷. It is just possible that Justin and Tertullian may have heard that the term minim included Christians by implication, but this seems unlikely; it is more probable that they knew that Christians were called Nos^urim, and other similar terms, in many eastern places. Reuven Kimelman has gone so far as to support Epiphanius' understanding of the the word Nos^urim, claiming that the reference to Nos^urim in the Cairo Genizah is meant to refer to the fourth-century Nazoraeans⁸, but again this seems unlikely. Whenever the curse included the Nos^urim and the minim together, it would appear most probable that the rabbis really did wish to curse all Christians specifically along with a

general curse against people with whom they did not agree theologically. Christianity was, after all, derived from Judaism; of all Jewish sects and offshoots, Christianity would have seemed the most offensive.

We have other literary evidence that Nos^rrim were hated by at least one Jewish group in the second century: those who followed Bar Kochba. Hegesippus writes that, according to Justin Martyr, Bar Kochba commanded that Christians should be punished severely if they did not deny Jesus was Messiah and blaspheme him (Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iv.8.4). However, the animosity felt by Bar Kochba towards the Christians in Jerusalem was probably not to do with minut as such, but may have had a more political motivation. It is almost certain that the Christians would have been pacifists at a time when he was priming the population for revolt. Rabbi Akiba, whose name is associated with Bar Kochba, decries minim when he says that those reading "outside" books, interpreted in the Babylonian Gemara as "books of the minim" (b.Sanh. 100b), would have no share in the world to come, but we do not need to leap to the conclusion that since Rabbi Akiba despised minim and Bar Kochba Christians, then minim and Christians were one and the same group.

References to minim in rabbinic literature are impossible to fit into one neat category. Nicolas De Lange writes that the word was "a convenient term to refer to different antagonists at different times and

perhaps even at the same time"⁹. Goodman sees a development in the scope of the term, so that in the early days minut referred to Jewish sectarianism, but later, in the Amoraic period, texts about minim might refer to (Gentile) Gnostics and orthodox Christians¹⁰. Rabbi Abahu's discussions with minim in Caesarea, some of whom are clearly Christian, gives us no proof of Jewish-Christianity, as these Christians inhabited a Graeco-Roman city whose population was mixed. Moreover, their views exhibit Marcionite or Gnostic beliefs¹¹ which would be very surprising to find amongst Jewish-Christian groups; the former sect rejected what it perceived as a Jewish contamination of the Gospel message, and Gnostic sects were generally concerned with more esoteric considerations than Jewish praxis.

Kimelman distinguishes between Palestinian and Babylonian usage of the word min. In the latter case min could apply to a Gentile but not in the former. This radical assertion lacks sure proof. He does, however, use as an illustration the one case where we do have a min who is clearly a Christian and an ethnic Jew (b.A.Z. 16b-17a; t.Hull. 2.22-24). Rabbi Eleazar, arrested once for minut, is coaxed by Rabbi Akiba into remembering why he might be thought to have been a min. Eleazar remembers that he was walking in Sepphoris when a man named Jacob from Kefar Sikhnin/Samma told him about minut in the name of Yeshu ben Pantiri. Yeshu ben Pantiri is a known

reference to Jesus¹². One version has it that Jacob cured Eleazar in the name of Yeshu ben Pantiri, but when Kimelman concludes from this that "Jewish-Christians figured prominently"¹³ in the Palestinian understanding of minim on the basis of this illustration he is overstating the case. It may be more helpful to note that magic is found as a component of minut. As with the minim of Capernaum, the min here displays magical powers, in this case to heal Eleazar. Use of the name of Jesus in spells does not automatically indicate that the user was a Christian. Magicians using the name of Jesus are found in rabbinic literature (b.A.Z. 28a; j.Sanh. 14.19-25d) but this indicates only that Jesus' name was considered effective in magical circles. In this instance, the magician Jacob appears to have been a Christian since he is speaking minut in the name of Jesus, and in the Babylonian Talmud version he utters what seems to be an apocryphal saying: "For the hire of a harlot she has gathered them, and to the hire of a harlot they shall return. From the place of filth they have come, and to the place of filth they will go." This impressed Eleazar and, being impressed (perhaps the implication being that he was bewitched), he was later arrested. The practice of magic does not mark Jacob as being a heterodox Christian. Julius Africanus was himself interested in the craft, and recorded some of his knowledge¹⁴. Jesus himself could be seen to be a magician¹⁵. It is not known whether Jacob should be classed as a Jewish-Christian,

though it is possible. It is possible more on account of chronological reasons than any other. As Pritz has argued, if the story is based on any real event, it should be dated at the turn of the first century and beginning of the second¹⁶. Eleazar ben Hyrkanos is recalling an incident from long ago. At this time it is likely that there were still Christian Jews, even Jewish-Christians, in Galilee and that this incident preserves some memory of their existence.

If Jacob was a min because he was a Christian, this does not mean he was a Christian because he was a min. Jewish-Christianity as such can in no way be identified as being the same phenomenon as minut. Minut may have meant different things to different people at different times. Even Goodman's definition of minim as Jews who absorbed Greek ideas from the coastal cities of Palestine¹⁷ is in the end too narrow. Minut was anything which deviated from the community norms laid down by the rabbis. The minim, of course, need not have consciously thought of themselves as belonging to any sorts of sects. As Goodman has convincingly argued, the rabbis struggled for authority in Galilee and attained it, after some compromises, only as late as the fourth century¹⁸. The story about the minim of Capernaum may better be seen as part of this struggle for authority. It should be remembered that the story is polemical, and its historicity is suspect, since it is written almost

500 years after the events it purports took place. Perhaps, nevertheless, it preserves some folk memory of the Capernaum population of the second century being resistant to rabbinic authority.

It should be noted that the narrative itself tells us by implication that, since they force Hanina to transgress the law by riding an ass on the Sabbath, the population of Capernaum were not Jewish-Christians. By definition, the careful observance of Jewish law is the characteristic feature of Jewish-Christian groups¹⁹. Even the so-called am ha-aretz of Galilee, of whom the rabbis did not always approve, kept the Sabbath²⁰. It is hard to imagine that either the Jewish-Christians or the am ha-aretz would wish to make Hanina offend God so grossly by transgressing the Sabbath, even to make him look a fool, and the fact that they themselves would "work" by casting a malicious spell on the Sabbath shows that they had little regard for the day themselves. It was people who had become lax in Jewish praxis, people who were influenced by the practices of Gentile pagans, that neglected to observe the day.

Bagatti's assertion that the cities such as Capernaum, Tiberias, Sepphoris and Caesarea had large Jewish-Christian populations because rabbinic writings make references to minim in or near these areas is, therefore quite unfounded²¹. Of these four cities, two - Tiberias and Sepphoris - had Roman administrations and one - Caesarea - was a Graeco-Roman city in which Jews

formed a large minority ethnic group. The presence of minut in such environments, given the close proximity of Gentiles, is not surprising.

If there is then no literary evidence for Jewish-Christians in Galilee, or in any other part of Palestine, there is archaeological evidence which may point to the most western extent of the Jewish-Christian groups in Syria, but it is unsure. Claudine Dauphin, in a survey of Farj in the Golan, noted inscriptions with both the Jewish menorah and Christian symbolism together. Similar inscriptions were found by Schumacher at Khan Bandak²² and Butmiyeh²³, as well as by Albright at nearby Nawa²⁴. Dauphin argues that the inscriptions in Farj show that Jews, Jewish-Christians and later Monophysite Christians lived together here in the Roman and Byzantine periods²⁵. What is clear is that the village was originally Jewish²⁶. At some point, Christian inscriptions were drawn by people from a Jewish iconographical tradition. They therefore used the symbol of the menorah along with the standard crosses, fishes and palm branches used by Christians everywhere. Dauphin herself wonders whether the inscriptions were drawn by descendants of Jewish-Christian refugees from Pella and cites Bagatti's theory that two synagogues in a Jewish community shows a split between Jews and Jewish-Christians²⁷. Farj had two synagogues, one of which was later converted into a Christian church. However, a drawing on the lintel from

this church (Figure 5.2) probably shows the cross on the Rock of Calvary, which dates the inscription to the middle of the fourth century at the earliest. The type of menorot depicted in the inscriptions in one Christian inscription is Byzantine (Figure 5.3); A. Negev has dated menorot with the horizontal bar at the top to the second half of the fourth century onwards. The menorah without a bar on top then became rare in the fifth to seventh centuries²⁸. This type is also found at Farj. In addition, there is at Farj a peculiar kind of cross-menorah (Figure 6) with a bar at the top, similar to one found by Schumacher at Breikah, 10 km. north of Farj²⁹. If all the inscriptions were produced for a Christian building at more or less the same time, they may then be placed in the latter part of the fourth century to the early fifth. This dating would fit with the known datable features. Since there was an orthodox church presence in the area of Golan and Bashan (Aere Bataneae) at the beginning of the fourth century and probably earlier (for which see below), the possibility that the Jews of Farj were converted to orthodox Christianity is equally as likely as their being Nazoraeans. The presence of multiple synagogues in a community is not in general indicative of different theological persuasions but of the size of the community³⁰. The people who inscribed these inscriptions were almost certainly ethnic Jews who had become Christians. Whether they were Jewish-Christians, however, is not shown conclusively by the

evidence. The presence of a menorah with Christian symbols does not immediately indicate Jewish-Christians. A tombstone dated A.D. 551 in the southern church at Eboda, for example, has both crosses and the menorah³¹. The menorah, seen as a candle-holder, a source of light, was a good symbol for Christians who might wish to indicate Christ. Without excavations that might provide further clues, it is impossible to define the group with any accuracy. An important indication of the group being Jewish-Christian would have been if Hebrew was used to express a Christian message, but the language of the Farj inscriptions is Greek (Figure 5.1). Nevertheless, in the absence of further material that would absolutely confirm the situation one way or another, the Farj material is just possibly the work of converts to the Nazoraean sect, since Farj lies in an area geographically close to where Nazoraeans were found in the late fourth century.

JEWS

The Bagatti-Testa school tends to look at minim as a phenomenon without any reference to the wider Jewish community. It is by no means necessary that Jewish-Christians lived near Jewish communities. Quite the opposite; they may have felt more secure in an area in which they were not thrown into constant conflict with other Jews for their beliefs. Such was the rabbis' animosity towards minim in general and Christians in

particular, one would expect that, as the rabbis' influence grew in Galilee, Christian Jews, including conservative Jewish-Christians, felt it better to migrate to places where their religious beliefs were better tolerated, even if rabbinic Jews were also found there. We know that third-century Christians were found east of Galilee in the Golan and Bashan, and west in the cosmopolitan coastal cities.

If they emigrated from Galilee and other Jewish areas, they were by no means the only ones to leave. The Jews of Palestine in the century before Constantine were conscious of shrinking in both power and distribution, and of being hedged about by other peoples with religious beliefs very different from their own. The weak Jewish position in Palestine owed much to the disastrous failure of Bar Kochba's revolt (A.D. 135), after which the Roman government excluded Jews not only from Jerusalem itself but from the hill country, Gophna and Herodium (j.Ned. 38a) and Acraba (j.Yeb. 9d)³². Many towns and cities in Judaea were completely destroyed, and later Christian pilgrims would remark upon the ruins³³. Jews were employed in the date and balsam plantations in the southern Jordan Valley, around Jericho (b.Shab. 26a) where there were Jewish villages, as well as in an area between Eleutheropolis and Hebron (the Daromas). Some were to be found around Nabata (cf. 1 Macc. 5:23), Samaria and the Jezreel Valley, but the main centres of

Jewish life and culture were the cosmopolitan Graeco-Roman cities of the coastal plain, especially Diospolis (Lydda), Jamnia, Azotus and Caesarea. Jews lived in the Decapolis region, the Golan and Bashan³⁴ and, particularly, rural Galilee³⁵. Avi-Yonah writes:

More than a third of the Jewish communities were urban in character. Considering that the urban communities were, unit by unit, more populous than the villages, it seems probable that over half the (Jewish) population of the coastal plain and beyond the Jordan had adopted a way of living characteristic of the Jews of the Diaspora.³⁶

In Galilee, the situation was different. The Galileans themselves were Jewish as a result of the forced conversions of 103 B.C.³⁷ and the Judaeen refugees of the post-revolt period were not altogether impressed by these country folk. The am ha-aretz of Galilee were often thought of as inferior intellectually and theologically. Nevertheless, the centuries that followed brought about an acquiescence to the rabbis on the part of the agricultural Galileans, and compromises from the rabbis, which would result in a sense of Jewish solidarity centred in Galilee, with Tiberias as Palestinian Judaism's unofficial capital.

In the third century, there was a relaxation in practice, if not in law, of the Roman ban on Jerusalem. Simeon Kamtra, a Jewish donkey driver whose course took him near the city (known since Hadrian as Aelia Capitolina), questioned whether he had to rend his garments every time he passed it by³⁸. Rabbis Hanina,

Jonathan and Joshua ben Levi visited the city³⁹, while Rabbi Meir and a group of pupils managed to settle there briefly⁴⁰. With the economic and political crises that beset the Empire in the third century, the Roman authorities appear to have had little energy to guard Aelia against Jewish infringements of the ban. Rabbi Jonathan said, "Anyone who wants to go up there can go" (b.B.M. 75b).

The Empire's crisis, which had allowed this to happen, also shook the Jewish communities of Palestine. The burdens of taxation and the hardship of rampant inflation were too heavy for many to carry, and emigration to Babylon could no longer be successfully discouraged⁴¹. As the economic depression became more and more severe, areas of Jewish settlement shrank as people could no longer make a living from the land. Jewish life outside Galilee became even more urban in character. There were only seven Jewish villages left in the Daromas at the end of the third century⁴² and a handful in the lower Jordan Valley, but the communities in Samaria disappeared, and those in the Golan, Bashan, Jezreel Valley and western Galilee decreased⁴³. Avi-Yonah estimates that in Galilee itself the Jewish population may not have been more than half the total⁴⁴. The Jerusalem Talmud records that Rabbi Yohanan taught: "most of the Land of Israel belongs to Israel" but his pupil, Rabbi Eleazar, said: "most of the Land of Israel is in the hands of Gentiles" (j.Dem. 2.1.22c)⁴⁵. Rabbi

Yohanan may have been optimistic, but his statement is evidence of some Jewish self-confidence. A wave of emigration shattered this confidence, and Jews saw themselves as a clear minority overall in the Promised Land⁴⁶.

Third- and fourth-century authors stress the smallness of Jewish occupation in Palestine. Celsus wrote that the Jews were "bowed down in some corner of Palestine" (Origen, Contra Celsum iv.36)⁴⁷, a matter that Origen did not dispute. Emperor Julian's version of Jewish history (Contra Galilaeos 209D-213A) seems to be influenced by the Jews' depressing present as much as by their past. According to Julian, their fortune was miserable: "one tiny tribe which not even two thousand years before had settled in one part of Palestine" (Contra Galilaeos 106C-D)⁴⁸.

Despite Avi-Yonah's estimate, however, there is little literary or archaeological evidence for pagan worship in Galilee itself. Goodman's observation that the rabbis may have called people "Gentiles" who nevertheless thought of themselves as Jews (or Samaritans?) warns us against taking rabbinic comments about the preponderance of Gentiles on face value⁴⁹. There were, however, significant Gentile presences in the heartland of Galilee in the cities where Roman administration was centred: Diocaesarea (Sepphoris) and Tiberias. Through these district capitals, the taxes were channelled to the Empire. The machinery that

operated this important task was in the hands of pagans, the imperial officers and bureaucrats, who were supported by a pagan army⁵⁰. However, these assertions must be reconciled with the fact that Epiphanius includes Diocaesarea and Tiberias in his list of places where no "Hellene" (pagan), Samaritan or Christian lived among the Jews (Pan. xxx.11.9-10). He writes that no Gentile lived μέσσον αὐτῶν, literally "in the middle of them". The solution may be that the Roman authorities ruled over the Jews, and that Diocaesarea and Tiberias were Jewish towns with a pagan ruling class which kept themselves socially separate, but this does not solve all the problems raised by Epiphanius' statement. Alternatively, it is possible that by the time Epiphanius was writing, in the late fourth century, the Roman administration had eroded away so that Jewish self-administration had replaced outside rule; Epiphanius then presumed this had always been the case. However, at the beginning of the century, Diocaesarea was a place in which ninety-seven Christians from the porphyry mines in Egypt would be tried by a Roman ruler⁵¹. Eusebius mentions that in his day in the "large city" of Diocaesarea "all the inhabitants are Jews" (Mart. Pal. (Syr) viii.1), and it was they who watched the martyrdoms of the Egyptian Christians. In Eusebius' story of the events here, we would seem to have a clear case of a Jewish population governed by a stratum of Roman authorities.

The material evidence from Sepphoris clearly attests a Gentile pagan presence in the Roman period, and literary sources apart from Epiphanius inform us of it. There was an impressively large theatre⁵², which is evidence for the builders' expectations of a correspondingly large audience, though a majority, if not all, of the audience may have been Jewish. A temple of the Capitoline triad is recorded⁵³ and a temple of Jupiter found on coins. The use of Roman sarcophagi, found embedded in the walls of the present citadel, shows that there were pagans there to be buried in the Roman manner. A magnificent Dionysius mosaic, dating from the middle of the third century, suggests that the god may have been revered here⁵⁴. Two statuettes from Greek mythology, one of Pan and one probably of Prometheus, were found in a cistern⁵⁵.

In Tiberias there was a Hadrianeum, which Epiphanius himself mentions (Pan. xxx.12.1-2), apparently finding no reason to try to reconcile this with his previous statement which has it that there were no pagans to maintain such a temple. Goodman has suggested that the structure was "probably in ruins" in the middle of the third century on the basis of the Jerusalem Talmud's tractate Aboda Zara (4.4.24a), as interpreted by S. Appelbaum⁵⁶, and Avi-Yonah suggests the same⁵⁷. Epiphanius says it was unfinished, and yet still a ναὸς μέγιστος and that people may have started to restore it as a public bath (Pan. xxx.12.2). Epiphanius admits

to being rather unclear on the matter, shown by his repeated use of $\tau\acute{\alpha}\chi\alpha$. There were, he understood, four walls standing made of huge stones. The difficulty is that we cannot know whether this was the state of the temple in the third century from this fourth-century information. Furthermore, while it is true that we should sometimes be wary of positing the existence of temples from coin types, when a mint looked for local inspiration it tended to mark the significant cultic features of a city. Goodman's view that numismatic evidence shows a "shaky indication of respect" for Zeus and Hygeia in Tiberias⁵⁸ is therefore a trifle too weak. The gods were ~~not~~ depicted on coins^{not} _{λ} because there was a shaky respect for them, but because the authorities in charge of the mint thought Zeus and Hygeia fitting symbols for the city of Tiberias. It may be argued that Hygeia is depicted simply because of the baths at Hammath, north of the town, but Zeus cannot be explained so easily. The representations of Zeus may be better seen as confirmation of the existence of the Hadrianeum. It is well-known that Hadrian showed great reverence for Jupiter/Zeus. In the temple of Zeus Olympusⁱ _{λ} at Athens the statues were of Hadrian. Sometimes, for example at Prusias, he was directly identified with the god⁵⁹. The same may have been the case at Tiberias.

On the other hand, there may well have been some kind of disruption of Roman control over Tiberias in the

middle of the third century. Rabbi Yohanan apparently ordered the destruction of statues of the gods in the public baths at Hammath (which also tends to suggest that it may well have been considered an Hygeian sanctuary)⁶⁰. The earliest synagogue at Hammath dates from the third century, under which a second-century building, resembling a gymnasium in plan, has been discovered. M. Dothan thinks this earlier building was a synagogue too, since later synagogues were frequently built on the ruins of earlier ones, but a significant find - a glass goblet shaped like a centaur - does not cohere well with this interpretation⁶¹. It seems more probable that we have a pagan public building, perhaps indeed a gymnasium, which was torn down and replaced with a synagogue in the third century. All this does at least argue against Simon's view that Tiberias was full of pagans at the end of the third century⁶², but prior to this there may well have been a significant Gentile pagan population.

At Diocaesarea, the relationship between the Jewish leaders and the Roman administration appears to have been quite cordial. Coin legends from the reign of Emperor Caracalla (A.D.198-217) minted at Diocaesarea read: "Diocaesarea, the Holy City, City of Shelter, Autonomous, Loyal, Friendship and Alliance between the Holy Council and the Senate of the Roman People"⁶³. Talmudic stories about Rabbi Judah and the Emperor reflect the situation here, in which pagans and Jews, probably living as different social strata, undertook dialogue⁶⁴. They were

sometimes physical neighbours; the Jerusalem Talmud refers to a Roman living next to Rabbi Jonathan in Sepphoris in the late third century (J.B.B. 2:11:7b). Certainly, all this warns us against taking Epiphanius' remarks about a fourth-century situation as being true for the third century. Gentile pagans and Jews did live together in Diocaesarea and Tiberias at this time.

The villages of Galilee cannot have been greatly threatened by Gentile settlement since, as Goodman points out, no disputes between^w_λ village communities are recorded and:

such co-operation is the best evidence for a basic similarity of outlook in the inhabitants of these villages, in contrast to the often mutually hostile villages elsewhere in Palestine and Syria in the early Byzantine period when divergences in religious preference, including attachment to particular Christian heresies, militated against combined action. §§

Such accord also provides good evidence that there were no wholly Jewish-Christian villages in Galilee that might have caused disharmony.

Nevertheless, the Jewish heartland was tiny, and influence from the Gentile pagans was hard to guard against. Despite the rabbis' attitude to their own minim, there was a fairly liberal attitude towards the (non-Christian?) Gentiles. Jews were given licence to trade and interact with them, subject to certain controls^{§§}. Jewish artists and craftsmen adopted some of paganism's artistic repertoire. E. E. Urbach sees this

development as pragmatic, and reflective of a new awareness of the distinction between idolatry and decoration⁶⁷, as well as showing that Jews were being influenced by Gentiles overall. The style of Galilean synagogues mainly came from Nabataean and Syrian architecture of the Roman period⁶⁸. The iconography of synagogue decoration combined typically Jewish motifs, like the menorah and the Ark, with fertility symbols (the palm tree), vine ornamentation that recalls Dionysiac motifs, oriental magical symbols like the pentagram ("the Seal of Solomon") and the hexagram ("the Star of David"), the sun-eagle of Syrian religion, winged victories and fabulous animals⁶⁹. From the fourth to the sixth centuries, Jews did not object to the depiction of Helios and the Zodiac on their synagogue floors, as at Beth Alpha, Na'aran, Hammath Tiberias, Husifa and, without Helios, at Susiya. The zodiac represented the cosmos⁷⁰. They did not mind, either, King David being represented as Orpheus, as he was in the sixth-century mosaic in the synagogue of Gaza⁷¹. All this indicates that there is a possibility that material discovered at Jewish sites which might not fit into the distinctive norms of Jewish iconography may yet be Jewish and not, by default, Jewish-Christian.

CHRISTIANS

If Epiphanius was wrong about the absence of Gentile

pagans in the heart of Galilee, was he correct that no Samaritans or Christians lived there? The context of his observation is a section dealing with the efforts of the fourth-century convert, Count Joseph of Tiberias, who wished to build Christian churches in Jewish strongholds in Galilee at the end of the reign of Emperor Constantine, probably around 335. Epiphanius writes that no churches had yet been erected in Jewish towns and villages of Galilee because of the rule that:

neither Hellenes (pagans), nor Samaritans nor Christians are to be among them. This (rule) of permitting no other race is observed by them especially at Tiberias, Diocaesarea which is Sepphoris, Nazareth and Capernaum.

Panarion xxx.11.9-10⁷²

It is at once obvious that while Epiphanius is referring to a past event in telling the story of Joseph of Tiberias, he uses here the passive present tense $\phi\upsilon\lambda\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, and not the past. This certainly makes it even more difficult to determine the historicity of his statement. Nevertheless, Epiphanius, on the basis of what he knew of Jewish attitudes in his own time, must have reached the conclusion that Jews had not permitted other religious/ethnic groups to live amongst them earlier in the century. It might well have been true for the mid-fourth century, when Joseph was living. We know it was not true as regards Gentile pagans in the third century; what of Christians?

Those like Bagatti and Testa who would argue for a Jewish-Christian presence in the Jewish heartland of

Galilee continuing into the fourth century have to maintain that Epiphanius did not consider Jewish-Christians as "Christian" at all and therefore ignored them⁷³. It is correct to say that Epiphanius considered Jewish-Christians to be heretical, but his discussions of specifically Christian heresies precludes us from thinking that he ruled them out as being non-Christian "Jews" even if he greatly disagreed with them. It was precisely because the heretics were Christians that Epiphanius was so wildly infuriated about their notions and practices⁷⁴. While Epiphanius is careful to point out the geographical distribution of "Ebionites" and Nazoraeans, he never once mentions that they were to be found anywhere west of the Jordan rift. An argument ex silentio for the existence of Jewish-Christians is too great a licence to take with Epiphanius here. Moreover, this shows no appreciation of Epiphanius' style, which is to include anything, hearsay or true, which outrages him about the Christian heresies. We can be quite sure that if Epiphanius had heard of groups of Jewish-Christians living in the towns of Jesus' childhood and ministry he would have informed us of the outrageous scandal in no uncertain terms.

In fact, no Christians of any kind seem to have been particularly widespread in Palestine before the fourth century. They are mainly to be located in the Graeco-Roman, cosmopolitan cities where diverse ethnic groups

and religions were found. We can presume that Christian communities existed in the following cities prior to A.D. 325 since bishops from these places attended the Council of Nicea: Paneas, Ptolemais, Maximianopolis/Legio, Caesarea, Sebaste, Diospolis/Lydda, Jamnia, Azotus, Ascalon, Gaza, Eleutheropolis, Nicopolis, Aelia Capitolina/Jerusalem, Jericho, Neapolis, Scythopolis, Capitolias, Gadara, Esbus, Philadelphia, Aere Bataneae⁷⁵. This list does not tell us how long Christians existed prior to the fourth century in these areas, nor does it inform us of the sizes of the groups.

The church in Jerusalem appears in Eusebius' story of Narcissus and Alexander (Hist. Eccles. vi.9-11). Eusebius tells us that during a persecution during the reign of Emperor Valerian (253-260) three Christian men, Piscus, Malchus and Alexander, were thrown to wild beasts in Caesarea (Hist. Eccles. vii.12). They did not come from this city, but Eusebius does not give their native town. In the same passage, Eusebius mentions a Marcionite woman who suffered the same fate in Caesarea. Later a Roman soldier of Caesarea named Marinus was beheaded for failing to sacrifice to the emperor and for being a Christian (Hist. Eccles. vii.15). Astyrius, a member of the Roman senate, may also have been a rare Christian believer from the upper classes, but this may be legend. It is said that Astyrius induced a miracle by silent prayer at Paneas which caused the sacrifice thrown into the springs there to reappear on the surface of the water

when it normally disappeared into the depths. Astyrius himself may well have been as surprised as everyone else at the phenomenon. The material given by Eusebius seems to indicate only that Astyrius was sympathetic to Christians: a liberal (Hist. Eccles. vii.17).

Our most informative source for Christianity in Palestine at the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth is undoubtedly Eusebius' Martyrs of Palestine⁷⁶. Since only the governor of Palestine, resident in the provincial capital, Caesarea, had the legal power to punish Christians who refused to sacrifice after the edict of 23 February, 303, Christians from throughout Palestine were sent to the city⁷⁷ where, conveniently for history, Eusebius lived. As edicts against the Christians became progressively harsher, Eusebius recorded the martyrs' fates and usually their provenances. In doing so he has provided us with a rough indication of how Christians were distributed in Palestine.

T. D. Barnes believes that Eusebius did not intend to provide a complete list of Palestinian martyrs, but rather that he wished only to preserve the memory of those he knew personally⁷⁸. In his Ecclesiastical History (viii.13.7), Eusebius writes that he would not try to give an account of the martyrdoms of Christians throughout the whole world since the records of martyrs belonged with those who had seen them "with their own

eyes". Instead, "for those coming after us, I will indeed record those well-known (struggles) to which I myself was near (παρεγενόμενον) by means of another written work." Perhaps this is an indication that Eusebius himself recorded only those martyrdoms he had witnessed with his own eyes, and the Syriac "the lucky eye saw the deed"

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found in the unabridged Syriac manuscript of Eusebius' work (BM Add. MS. 12,150), translated by W. Cureton in 1861⁷⁹, might also be used to bolster this interpretation. However, as Cureton notes in his introduction to the text, Eusebius records two events which took place on the very same day: the martyrdoms of Romanus in Antioch and Alphaeus and Zacchaeus in Caesarea⁸⁰. He could not have been physically present at both. Eusebius says in the Syriac long recension that he has recorded the martyrs he knew about from "the mouth of ... those believers who were acquainted with them":

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This does not suggest that Eusebius was present to witness all the martyrdoms he reports. Eusebius emphasises the fates of those he knew personally, like Pamphilus, but those he did not know are still mentioned for posterity. These are the shadowy figures of the "three youths" (Mart. Pal. viii.2-3), four members of Pamphilus' household (Mart. Pal. xi.15-18), a group Theodosia spoke with (Mart. Pal. vii.1-2), a group from Gaza (Mart. Pal. viii.4) and others. Eusebius does

therefore appear to have attempted to give a reasonably comprehensive account for posterity.

A table of the martyrs and the churches to which they belonged will help to determine the geographical distribution of Christians at the beginning of the fourth century⁶¹.

<u>Martyrs</u>	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Mart. Pal.</u>
Procopius and companions	Scythopolis	1.1-2
many local church leaders	whole province ⁶²	1.3
Zacchaeus	Gadara	1.5; Syr.5
Alphaeus	Caesarea (formerly of Eleutheropolis)	1.5; Syr.5
Romanus	a village of Caesarea (killed in Antioch)	11.1-5
Timothy	Gaza	111.1
Agapius	Gaza	111.1; vi.1-7
Thecla, a Montanist ⁶³	Gaza	111.2; Syr.11
Montanist companions of Thecla	Gaza?	Syr.11
Timolaus (Timotheus)	Pontus	111.2-4
Dionysius	Tripolis	111.2-4
Romulus	Diospolis	111.2-4
Paesis	Egypt	111.2-4
Alexander	Egypt	111.2-4
Alexander	Gaza	111.2-4

Apphianus (Syr. Epiphanius)	Caesarea (formerly of Lycia)	iv.2-15
Theodosia	Caesarea (formerly of Tyre)	vii.1-2
large group of Christians whom Theodosia spoke with	unknown	vii.1-2
Silvanus and companions	Gaza	vii.4; xiii.1ff.
Domninus	unknown	vii.4
Auxentius	unknown	vii.4
Pamphilus and others	Caesarea	vii.4-5; xi,1-19
some young men	unknown	vii.4
some young women	unknown	vii.4
97 Christians	Egypt (from mines in Thebais)	viii.1
three youths	Palestine	vii.4
a group of Christians	Gaza	viii.4
Ennatha (Syr. Hatha)	Gaza	viii.5-8
Valentina	Caesarea	viii.5-8
Paul	unknown	viii.9-12
130 Christians	Egypt	viii.13
Antoninus	unknown	ix.4-5
Zebinas	Eleutheropolis	ix.4-5
Germanus	unknown	ix.4-5
Ennathas	Scythopolis	ix.4ff.
a group, including Ares, Probus, Elias	Egypt	x.1
Peter (Apselamus, Syr. Absalom)	Anaea (Syr. Aia)	x.1-2
Asclepius, a Marcionite	unknown	x.2; Syr.39

Vales	Aelia	xi.1-5
Paul	Jamnia	xi.1-5
five Christians	Egypt	xi.6-14
four members of Pamphilus' household, including Porphyry	Caesarea	xi.15-18
Adrianus	Batanaea	xi.29-31
Eubulus	Batanaea	xi.29-31
Theodulus	Caesarea	xi.24
Julian	Cappadocia	xi.25
Seleucus	Cappadocia	Syr.42

Eusebius gives us 26 named individuals from Palestine, and numerous other Palestinians included in groups. Companions and others are said to come from Caesarea, Scythopolis and, in particular, Gaza. In addition, there are three named individuals - Domninus, Auxentius and Paul - whose provenance is unrecorded, but since they are familiar by name to Eusebius and otherwise not noteworthy, it is likely they were friends or acquaintances of his from Caesarea. As mentioned above, there are also anonymous persons whose provenance is not known. These were probably Palestinians not personally known to Eusebius, people whose fates he had heard about since they were sentenced in Caesarea. A striking feature of Eusebius' record is the number of named foreigners he includes: Paesis and Alexander from Egypt, Timolaus from Pontus, Dionysius from Tripolis, Apphianus from Lycia, Theodosia from Tyre, Julian and Seleucus from Cappadocia.

As it is stated with Apphianus and Theodosia, so all these people may well have all been resident in Caesarea at the time of their arrest. This would explain how Eusebius came to know them, and would correspond with what we know of Caesarea as a cosmopolitan city and an international port. In addition, there were groups of Egyptians passing through Palestine and Egyptians in Palestinian mines.

The list demonstrates that the main concentrations of Christians were probably in Caesarea and Gaza. Eleutheropolis, Scythopolis, Gadara, Batanaea, Aelia and Jamnia also had Christian churches. Not surprisingly, all these places sent bishops to the Council of Nicea. Eusebius also mentions the village of Anaea as producing a martyr: Peter/Absalom. In his Onomasticon, Anaea is listed by Eusebius as one of three Christian villages in Palestine (Onom. 26.9, 14). With another, Jethira (Onom. 88.3; 108.2; 110.18), it lay in the Daromas, in the territory of Eleutheropolis. While these villages were ~~then~~ located in an area known to have been populated also by a proportion of Jews, Eusebius does not mention that they were "Ebionite". Eusebius admires the ascetic young man Peter/Absalom who was burnt on a pyre and gives no indication that he was anything but orthodox. Both at Eleutheropolis and Terebinthus (Mamre) there were important pagan cult sites, and probably, with shrinking Jewish landholdings, the majority of the population in

the region by the end of the third century was pagan. There is then no reason to suggest that Peter/Absalom came from a Jewish-Christian community. Another Christian village named Cariatha (Onom. 112.16) existed well into pagan territory on the other side of Lake Asphaltitis (the Dead Sea). This completes the record of where Christians were known to have lived in the region of Palestine prior to Constantine.

Many of the cities where Christians were found also had Jewish communities, so it is quite probable that there were ethnically Jewish Christians in the churches⁴, but it must be stressed again that an ethnic Jew who becomes a Christian is not the same as a Jewish-Christian, or Judaeo-Christian, properly defined. Eusebius does not mention the latter at all in his account of the persecutions in Palestine, even though he includes Marcionites (and cf. Hist. Eccles. vii.12) and Montanists. The presence of such sects in the country shows that Palestinian Christianity did not develop in isolation, but was part of the whole Church, even before Constantine turned his attention to the province. The many foreign martyrs of Palestine known to Eusebius reinforces the impression that the church of Palestine kept close contact with churches of other lands. The Palestinian church was influenced by the theological trends of the second and third centuries, both heretical and orthodox (including, it would seem from Jewish sources, Gnosticism⁵) but the overwhelming impression we

get from Eusebius' account is that most of the martyred Christians in Palestine were within the bounds of mainstream theology. There is absolutely no mention of any Ebionites. Bagatti's idea that the Roman authorities could not reach as far as places inhabited by Jewish-Christians²⁶ does not seem likely in view of the known comprehensiveness of the persecution. If it could reach as far as a little village like Anaea, it could reach anywhere.

SAMARITANS

According to Jewish tradition, the Samaritans were the outcome of intermarriage between Gentile pagan foreigners and the Hebrews of the Northern Kingdom, which took place after the Assyrians vanquished Israel in 721 B.C.; a process which corrupted the true faith of Yahweh²⁷. The Samaritans, on the other hand, considered themselves to be the guardians of the pure religion of Moses, accepting the Pentateuch alone as inspired scripture. They continued to call themselves "Israelites"²⁸ and spurned the Jerusalem-centred religion of Judaea and the Jews²⁹.

The Samaritan religion was not recognised as a religio licita in the same way as was Judaism, and Origen informs us that on account of circumcision, they were persecuted (Contra Celsum 11.13). During the third century, the Samaritans had a renaissance of sorts when

Baba Rabba succeeded in gaining political autonomy for Samaria³⁰, and there was a corresponding revival in worship, language and literature. Samaritans would, however, suffer extreme persecution under the Christian emperors from Constantine onwards, which prompted them to engage in repeated revolts³¹. In 484, a particularly fierce uprising was suppressed, with a loss of about 10,000 Samaritan lives³², and Emperor Zeno destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, replacing it with a church³³. Resentment again flared into violence 38 years later. During this revolt Constantine's splendid church at Bethlehem was burnt. The Samaritans managed to seize Scythopolis and met with some success until their eventual defeat. This time about 20,000 Samaritans died and, for those that remained, severe persecution, fines and slavery crippled the Samaritan communities in Palestine for good³⁴. Their subsequent demise forms a striking contrast to the history of the Jews. However, it is necessary to put aside their poor situation in later centuries when considering the century before Constantine. In this period, Samaritans were a vigorous and significant population group in Palestine.

The focal point for the Samaritan religion was the holy Mount Gerizim and the temple there on its main peak, which had been, ostensibly, a temple to Zeus³⁵. The temple, built in the fourth century B.C., was dedicated to Zeus Hellenios (Josephus, Ant. xi.257) or Zeus Xenios

(2 Macc. 6.2) and was destroyed by John Hyrcanus in 128 B.C. Another temple from the second century was built on the lower peak, Tell er-Ras, and was dedicated to Ἄϊος ὑψιστός³⁶. Excavations at the site of this second temple were conducted by R. Bull between 1964 and 1968. A temple of the second to third centuries A.D. was discovered (building A) and under it a podium of unhewn stones (building B) was dated to the third century B.C. Recently, the dating has been revised and it seems that both constructions distinguished by Bull are Roman. The temple was built in two stages: the first part under Antoninus Pius (138-161) and the second probably under Caracalla (198-217)³⁷. It is now known that there was a fortified town on the main peak of Mount Gerizim³⁸. The site of the first temple probably continued to be the place of Samaritan worship, while the second-century temple may then have been used only by pagans. It was without doubt on the site of the older temple that Zeno built the church, and his purpose in doing this was clearly to deliver a severe blow to the Samaritan faithful. Since Mount Gerizim was used by pagans as well as Samaritans, this might explain why the rabbis equated the two (cf. j.Pes. 1.27b).

There was a "Samaritan strip" according to rabbinic sources (b.Hag. 25a, cf. Eicha Rabati 3.7) around ancient Neapolis and Sebaste, but it is difficult to determine how extensive this strip was. Literary sources attest that there were numerous Samaritan synagogues within a

fifteen kilometre radius of the Mount. This, combined with archaeological discoveries, informs us that Samaritan settlements probably existed in the following places: Awartha, Decatus, Hivria, Kiryat Hagga/Hajja, Kefar Qalil, Macher, Platanus (Balata), Rujeib, Salem (Sanim) and Sychar⁹⁹. Identification of Samaritan remains is, however, controversial, especially if inscriptions are absent¹⁰⁰. In Nablus, there are the remains of an ancient Samaritan synagogue in the al-Hadra (Huzn Ya'acub) mosque; two Samaritan decalogue inscriptions have been used in its walls¹⁰¹.

Further Samaritan villages lay west and north-west of this centre near Mount Gerizim. Probable Samaritan sites include Silet edh-Dhar, Anabtah, Tur Kerem, Jeshub, Socho, Zeita, Qedumim. To the east, Beth Dagon (Beit Dejan) was also probably Samaritan¹⁰². Near Mount Carmel was the large village of Castra Samaritanorum¹⁰³. A Samaritan village named Tharsila is known to have existed as far away as Batanaea¹⁰⁴.

The town of Nicopolis (Emmaus) was largely Samaritan (J.A.Z. 85.45d); Samaritan inscriptions have been discovered there, including the earliest known inscription in the distinctive paleo-Hebrew script used by Samaritans¹⁰⁵. In the nearby village of Selebi (Salbit, Shaalvim) a Samaritan synagogue has been identified¹⁰⁶. A Samaritan inscription has also been found at ancient Lydda¹⁰⁷.

Samaritan sarcophagi have been found in the coastal region at Caesarea, Binyamma, Pardes-Hanna, Hadera, Giv'at-Haim, Pardes Hagdud, Netanya, Rosh Ha'ayin and on the borders of Galilee at Ein Hasofet, Ar'ara and Rehan, as well as in central Samaria at Arraba, Ajja, Kufeir, Khirbet Kheibar, Silet edh-Dhar, Nablus, Zuatha, Beit Iba, Khirbet Askar, Talluze, Khirbet el-Farua and Akraba, and further south at Ammuriya¹⁰⁸.

Samaritan lamps have been found all over Palestine. Large numbers have come from central Samaria, and from Tel Barukh on the northern boundary of Tel Aviv, Kfar Saba (Capharsaba), Tel Arshuf (Apollonia), Netanya, Caesarea, Habonim, Haifa, Kefar Ara, Ein Hashofet, Silet edh-Dhar, Beth Shean, Nahf and Beth Shearim, the latter two places being in western Galilee. None have been found in the heart of Galilee¹⁰⁹. Near Beth Shean, a Samaritan synagogue has been identified¹¹⁰. While the presence of Samaritan lamps and sarcophagi indicate Samaritan manufacturers and not necessarily Samaritan use, it is generally presumed that in the majority of cases these objects were used by Samaritans.

There were significant Samaritan communities in the Graeco-Roman cities on the coast. Caesarea has a mixed population in which Samaritans are known until the sixth century A.D.¹¹¹. Joppa's Samaritan community is indicated by the remains at Tel Barukh, where Samaritan amulets and lamps probably show that Samaritans were buried there¹¹². A Samaritan synagogue from the sixth or

seventh centuries A.D. was discovered at Ramat Aviv near the main entrance to the Ha'aretz Museum beside Tel Qasileh¹¹³. In Antipatris (Tel Aphek), the Samaritans formed a large part of the population¹¹⁴. A Samaritan talisman has been found in Ashdod (Azotus)¹¹⁵. Six Samaritan inscriptions have been brought to light in Gaza¹¹⁶. Samaritan inscriptions discovered in the memorial to Moses on Mount Nebo (Ras Siyagha) indicate that it was probably a holy site to the Samaritans before it became a place of Christian pilgrimage¹¹⁷.

This survey shows that Samaritans were well distributed throughout Palestine in the period before Constantine and for some time after. It is therefore important to consider possible Samaritan origins for archaeological data that does not at once seem to be either Jewish or Christian.

PAGANS

There was never a time in which Judaism was the only religion of Palestine¹¹⁸. Indeed, the Hebrew scriptures are testimony to a running battle between the worshippers of Yahweh and those devoted to local gods or imported beliefs. Unfortunately for history, the descendants of the other ethnic groups in Palestine left no records of their version of this conflict. By the third century A.D., when Jewish power in the region had been seriously weakened, the traditions of the Gentile population of

Palestine blossomed. This is attested in rabbinic writings, where the rabbis complain about "Amorite ways" (e.g. t.Ber. 7.2; b.B.M. 25b¹²⁰) as well as in tractates which deal with paganism and Jews' interaction with Gentiles. The Gentiles were, in this period before Constantine, the largest and most influential segment of the population in Palestine¹²⁰. The strength of paganism here parallels the strength of paganism everywhere during the third century¹²¹.

Palestine, lying on the trade route between Egypt and Mesopotamia, had been subject to many invasions, after which immigrants from abroad settled (from Hebrews to Phoenicians, Philistines to Romans) and intermarried with the descendants of Canaanites and other peoples already resident in the land. After the Jews were forced to leave the area around Jerusalem, Syrians and Nabataeans joined people from other parts of the country to settle the region (cf. Justin, Dial. xvi; Origen, in Jos. xxii.1; Eusebius, Dem. Evang. vii.1.79; viii.3.10-12; Jerome, in Esa. 1.7). There was, of course, a Roman presence in the form of retirement colonies for Roman soldiers¹²², but the majority of the Gentile pagan population were native Palestini¹²³. They were not an homogeneous group. In the Golan and Bashan were Ituraeans, and in the south and east, Nabataeans, while those in between preserved local characteristics. All these had experienced some degree of Hellenisation in

the centuries following Alexander the Great's conquests, and they had thrived in the Seleucid Empire. Photius (Bibl. 242¹²⁴) records that the people of Palestine worshipped Greek gods, citing Asclepiodotus. The local gods were to varying extents equated with those of the Greek pantheon, and later that of the Romans. An example of this may be seen in the "translation" of Hadad (Rimmon) of Damascus. This god absorbed local Baals and thereafter became Zeus of Damascus and Zeus of Heliopolis (Baalbek). Zeus-Hadad's chief temple, by 150 B.C., was at Heliopolis-Bambyce (Mabbog) where his consort was Atargatis. Atargatis in turn fused with Astarte to become the Syrian Aphrodite of Lucian's De Dea Syria¹²⁵. Such Hellenisation did not overwhelm local identity, or the identity of local gods: Resheph by any other name was still Resheph. Today, the site of ancient Apollonia corresponds to the modern town of Arshuf, which is the Arabic name for Resheph. The worship of Apollo at Apollonia appears to have been understood by the local inhabitants to be the worship of Rephesh¹²⁶.

The Canaanite traditions were long in dying, and some people may consciously have considered themselves to be ethnically or religiously Canaanite. Augustine called Palestinians "Canaanites" (Ep. ad Rom. xiii), which may be explained as polemic, but an inscription from Cirta, now Constantine, dating from before the Roman occupation mentions a certain "Abdeshmun son of Modir, Canaanite"¹²⁷, which is much harder to ignore.

In the case of the Nabataeans, argument abounds as to how indigenous they were. Reputedly, they were Arab nomads who founded a kingdom in the second century B.C. in areas east of the Jordan rift in the Negev and Sinai. However, according to Avi-Yonah, the Arabs became a ruling stratum over a predominantly rural people whose roots were much more ancient in the region. Only this solution would make sense of the religious life of the Nabataean cities, for the iconography of the temples does not show us a pantheon appropriate to the nomadic, desert Arabs, but rather one which reflects the consciousness of a settled agricultural people¹²⁸. On the other hand, Avraham Negev believes that these Arabs themselves had very ancient roots in the area, particularly in the Sinai¹²⁹, and believes that the nomads became urbanised and engaged in agriculture in the first century A.D. Negev does not address the problem from Avi-Yonah's iconographical angle, but points to names as a clue to this society's origins and religious thought. Negev notes that "Baal", "Allah" and "El", all common Semitic deities, are frequently employed in names, whereas peculiarly Nabataean gods like Dushara and Allat are rarely found in names. Since Dushara was the principal Nabataean god, his rare appearance in names is difficult to explain. While the problem is yet to be solved, it will suffice here to suggest that in the third century a Nabataean city was not necessarily one composed of the

descendants of Arab nomads, and the Nabataean gods were not necessarily those brought from the desert.

Before turning to look at the main areas of pagan religion in Palestine prior to Constantine, which point to the corresponding Gentile distribution in the country, it must be admitted that a comprehensive summary cannot be produced. The existence of Jewish communities is much easier to determine since literary sources record these with far more frequency than they do Gentile towns and villages, mainly thanks to the rabbis. In addition, the Jewish practice of erecting a synagogue as soon as the community could sustain one means that archaeology can verify a site as having Jewish occupancy at a certain time. In contrast, pagan life was not altogether focused on a temple. The great religious monuments of the Graeco-Roman world are the tip of the pagan iceberg; religion tended to remain a private matter. Only in the former Nabataean kingdom have temples been found in smaller towns and villages with some regularity¹³⁰.

In Palestine, worship frequently employed small figurines, such as have been found in Beth Shean, ancient Scythopolis¹³¹. The rabbis' fear of pagan ways is to some extent justified if we remember, with Goodman, that:

any house might have been used for idolatrous worship, whether custom-built and specially decorated or not, and any stone might have an idol set upon it, whether specially cut and shaped or just plastered and painted for the purpose (cf. m.A.Z. 3.7).¹³²

In Palestine, it is very likely that the veneration of

high places (bamoth) continued (cf. I Kings 12:30; 2 Kings 21:2-3; Deut. 12:2). The remnants of this form of Canaanite religion may have continued until the arrival of Islam in the area in the seventh century. This would account for the many awliâ (sing. weli). These are domed Muslim chapels, often accompanied by trees. The word weli is supposed to refer to a Muslim saint who is buried under a pillar, but not every weli has a corpse. The awliâ are a kind of "Muslim disguise", as Wilkinson puts it, for the ancient local Baals of Canaan¹³³. It is then not surprising that we find the weli of Sheikh 'Ahmed el-'Areini on the acropolis of the important Bronze and Iron Age site at Tel 'Erani, or that a weli was located on the former acropolis of Gezer. Sometimes they are proximate to other venerated sites, such as the cave of Pan at Banyas (Paneas, Caesarea Philippi), where lies the weli of el-Hadr¹³⁴, a kind of composite figure of Elijah and St. George¹³⁵.

Tawfiq Canaan's extensive study of Muslim holy places in Palestine at the beginning of this century shows that the entire land was covered with innumerable sacred shrines: awliâ, sacred trees and groves, sacred caves, sacred springs and wells, sacred stones or heaps of stones and so on¹³⁶. It is easy to see that the proliferation of holy places in Palestine is not a recent phenomenon. The Gentile pagans of third-century Palestine may have perceived the land as similarly covered with sacred zones.

Worship of dolmens is mentioned by the rabbis (cf. m.A.Z. 1.4) as is the veneration of asherot, which in rabbinic Hebrew referred to a living tree or grove of trees¹³⁷. The practice of venerating groves is as ancient as the cults of bamoth (Hosea 5:13; Isaiah 1:19; 57:5,7; Ezek. 6:13). Since trees are highly perishable, and all the ancient trees have perished, we do not know how predominant these asherot were in the third century. There were certainly hundreds of them in Palestine at the time Canaan wrote. Some clues about how the trees were viewed may be gleaned from the rabbis' rules on what a Jew should not do in regard to them. Like the pagans, the Jews were not allowed to use wood from such groves for cooking, or for making artefacts (m.A.Z. 3.9). The Muslim groves of trees today enjoy in the Muslim community the same inviolability.

The gods of Palestine, apart from the introduced Greek deities of the cities, were agricultural, and they were celebrated in agricultural festivals. Feasts were a chief characteristic of the local religions, and these took place at Terebinthus (George Syncellus, Chron. 1.202; J.A.Z. 1.4), at Petra and Elusa (Epiphanius, Pan. 11.22.10f) among other places. Many of the local people took part in such a feast (at Enaim: Eusebius, Onom. 8.12; at Gilgal: Onom. 66.4, cf. at Areopolis: Onom. 36.25; at Hermon: Onom. 20.11). Pagans and Jews appear to have attended the feast at Terebinthus (Mamre)

together (Onom. 6.13; 7.20f; Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. 11.4-54). These feasts would take place around the haram, a sacred area belonging to a deity or a tomb¹³⁸.

Hermes were found by roadsides, though these were probably introduced by Roman soldiers. These heaps of stones in honour of Hermes/Mercury were added to by passers by. The rabbis, aware of this habit, refer to any idol as "Merkulis" (cf. m.Sanh. 7.6). As Rabbi Isaac said, apparently in some consternation: "if the names of idolatry were examined singly there would not be room in all the world for them" (Sifre Deut. 43)¹³⁹.

Palestine was heavily garrisoned, not only in provincial headquarters, but also in the midst of towns such as Ein Gedi¹⁴⁰, as well as by means of a plethora of forts. The Roman army's famous predilection for the worship of Mithras should not be forgotten, especially after a Mithraeum was discovered ~~was discovered~~ in Caesarea, and a Mithraic medallion¹⁴¹. There may also have been a Mithraeum in the vicinity of Diocaesarea for the use of the troops¹⁴².

Having now introduced the Gentile pagans of Palestine, the following summary of their main cultic centres will show how widespread they were in the century before Constantine¹⁴³. The ancient name of the place will be followed by a list of items indicative of a Gentile pagan presence.

Abila

Acropolis. Temples. Tombs full of pagan motifs.¹⁴⁴

Ad Dianem

The name suggests that a temple of Diana (Artemis) existed here.¹⁴⁵

Aelia Capitolina

Capitoline temple. Temple of Venus/Astarte, probably the city Tyche, on Golgotha. Theatre and hippodrome probably dating from the time of Herod the Great. A large number of Roman troops were stationed here and at nearby Ramat Rahel. Hadrian may have wished to continue the abortive work of Antiochus IV, who dedicated the Jewish Temple to Dionysius Sabazios (2 Macc. 6:7) and began building another temple. At the site of the Bethesda pool there was a healing sanctuary for Serapis. The two pools are connected by an underground passage decorated with frescoes. Objects with dedicatory inscriptions and reliefs demonstrate the pagan nature of the site. A Latin inscription of A.D. 116 belonging to an altar or monument invokes Jupiter Serapis for the health and victory of the Emperor Trajan. A bone carving on a handle which depicts a partly clad female figure and a youth holding a bunch of grapes appears to have Dionysian associations. A mosaic found in 1901 near Damascus Gate may depict Orpheus. Many tombs from the Roman period have been found around Jerusalem, some of which are

clearly pagan.¹⁴⁶

Aenam

A temple and a spring.¹⁴⁷

Antipatris (Tel Aphek)

Roman temple from the beginning of the third century, probably destroyed in the earthquake of A.D. 419. A small theatre. Pagan mausoleum.¹⁴⁸

Apollonia (Tel Arshuf)

The sanctuary of the god Apollo/Resheph.¹⁴⁹

Ascalon (Ashkelon)

Temples of Apollo, Atargatis and Isis. A. F. Hill notes that Ascalon was famous for the worship of Aphrodite Ourania (=Atargatis?), also Baal (Apollo?). Coins of Ascalon have a goddess with the words $\phi\alpha\nu\eta\ \beta\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ (Pene-Baal), which refers to Tanit or Astarte. A small draped statue of Hercules (Heracles, Melkart) has been found here as well as reliefs of winged Victory (Nike), a figure of Atlas, a depiction of Isis and Harpocrates, sculptures of Aphrodite kneeling, a bust and head of Pan, a relief of Pan and the nymph, a portrait of a Roman empress and a painted tomb with pagan motifs including Pan playing a syrinx. Lead coffins made in Ascalon had Hermes on the side with vine tendrils.¹⁵⁰

Ashtaroth

A temple of Atargatis. ¹⁵¹

Azotus Hippensus (Ashdod)

Temple of Dagon. ¹⁵²

Bashan

This region was occupied by the Ituraeans and was predominantly pagan. A sculptured basalt lintel with a triad of two gods and a goddess was found at Mashara, along with three altars. M. Ben Dov identified the gods as the Heliopolitan triad: Jupiter-Zeus, Venus-Aphrodite and Mercury-Hermes, but one can see in this the Hellenised local deities of Hadad, Tanit-Astarte and Melkart. Lucian of Samosata (De Dea Syria iv) identified Astarte with Selene, which perhaps accounts for the crescent moon on her representation on the lintel. ¹⁵³

Bethlehem

A sacred grove and cave of Tammuz-Adonis (cf. Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iv.6.3). Tertullian (Adv. Jud. xiii) says there were no Jews in Bethlehem in his day. ¹⁵⁴

Bitolium

A temple. ¹⁵⁵

Cadasa

A temple of the second century and monumental tomb. Two inscriptions to "Holy God" and "Holy God of the Sky"

identify the worshipped deity as Baal Shamin (Zeus-Hadad). 155

Caesarea

Many temples. The Caesarea Maritima cup in the Louvre depicts "Asklepios Leontoukhos" (lion-holder). Theatre. Hippodrome. Tetrapylon. Statues of Asclepius, Zeus, Apollo or Dionysius. Serapis and Isis monument. Athletic contests and games. Hadrianeum (Augusteum?). Mithraeum. Coins of the city depict Zeus, Poseidon, Athena, Apollo, Tyche, Dionysius, Ares, Helios, Demeter, Hercules, Hygeia, Serapis. A statue of Artemis of Ephesus dates from the third century. A figure of a satyr is now in the Israel Museum (no. 64-490). A white marble figure of Tyche, discovered in 1971, has been illuminated by another fragment of the same sculpture, which shows the headless torso of a male figure; this explains why many coins from Caesarea show an indistinct figure at the feet of Tyche. A remarkable imported sarcophagus depicting the war of the Amazons, griffins and trees of life is now in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem, as well as a Roman funerary altar of the first to second centuries. 157

Capitolias

A temple of the Capitoline triad. 158

Carmel, Mount and Cape

Once holy to the priests of Baal, Tacitus wrote that the name Carmel applied to both the Mount and the god there, who had no statue or temple (Hist. ii.78f). Iamblichus, the Neoplatonist, describes Carmel as a holy mountain (Vita Pyth. iii.15, cf. Suetonius, Vespasianus v).

Excavation has uncovered a large statue with an accompanying base, on which is a dedication to Heliopolitan Zeus Carmelos. The god Carmel was therefore syncretised with Zeus-Hadad (Baal) of Baalbek (Macrobius says that the Heliopolitan Zeus is Hadad, which is just another way of saying Baal: Saturnalia i.23.10-19). Forty-seven fragments of a casket carved in bone showing a Dionysian cycle were found in modern Haifa, also a Roman bath and tomb. The ruins of a temple have been found at Qod er-Rihan. A pagan holy tree existed somewhere on the mount (t.A.Z. 6.8). A pottery statue of Venus with a small snake on her thigh, found in a cave in el-Wad, is now in the Israel Museum (no. 1-5156).¹⁵⁹

Dan

A Roman period temple of a male deity.¹⁶⁰

Daphne

Josephus says that there was a temple to the golden calf here (B.J. iv.3). A bull was represented in the iconography of Mithras, but Josephus may have been metaphorical.¹⁶¹

Dhat Ras

A Nabataean temple (of Atargatis?). 162

Dibon

A Nabataean temple. 163

Diocaesarea (Sepphoris)

See above.

Diocletianopolis (Sarafra)

A temple of Serapis. 164

Dium

Temples, including one of Zeus-Hadad. Theatre. 165

Dora

Temples of Zeus and Astarte. Theatre. At Tel Dor a huge public building has been excavated. It lies adjacent to the main street leading from the the gate to the temple area. A marble statue of Hermes has also been found. 166

Eboda

A temple dedicated to Zeus Obodas. A shrine of Aphrodite was built on the acropolis on the site of a former sanctuary. A small marble altar and a tiny bronze statue of Venus are now in the Israel Museum (nos. 64-1585 and

64-1580) along with a bronze panther figurine which clearly formed part of a gladiatorial scene.¹⁶⁷

Encharim (En Kerem, Ain Karim)

A marble statue of Aphrodite. Part of a statue of Adonis. Numerous fallen column shafts indicate the existence of a temple of the Roman period.¹⁶⁸

El 'Al (Ain el-Kahwa)

Basalt statue of a goddess and pagan sarcophagus.¹⁶⁹

Eleutheropolis (Beth Guvrin)

Eleutheropolis was a mixed town of Jews, retired Roman soldiers and other pagans, and even some Christians. It was one of four towns "released" from paying tithes and observing the Sabbatical year by Rabbi Judah the Prince (j.Dem. 2.22c) because it was no longer predominantly Jewish. The hippodrome was used for gladiatorial combats.¹⁷⁰

Elusa

Temple of Venus and annual festival. The goddess was identified here with the morning star.¹⁷¹

Emmatha (Hammam Gader, El-Hamma)

Springs of Eros and Anteros. Festivals held here were famous (cf. Epiphanius, Panarion xxx.5.7). Theatre. Therapeutic thermae. The site was later Christianised

and called the Baths of Elijah. The synagogue dates only from the fifth century, and while Jews visited here to bathe and to determine the Sabbath boundaries between the baths and Gadara, Emmatha was markedly pagan.¹⁷²

Gadara

Temples of Zeus, Astarte, Hercules. Two theatres. A ring discovered here shows, on one face, a tetrastyle temple with Zeus on the throne accompanied by a small Nike and, on the other side, a temple with the Three Graces. Gadara also shows the Three Graces on coins from the times of Elagabalus and Gordian, which implies that it was a centre for their cult.¹⁷³

Gaza

Temples of Helios, Aphrodite (=Atargatis?), Apollo, Kore-Persephone, Athena, Hecate, Tyche, Isis. The chief god was Zeus Marnas, worshipped in the Marneion, a great temple which existed until the fifth century. Gaza had the largest known statue of Zeus in the world, which is now in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul. The festival at Gaza's port, Maiumas, was one of the most important in Roman Palestine (see below). North-east of Gaza, at Erez, a statue of a griffin with a six-pointed star or wheel dated 210 A.D. was discovered.¹⁷⁴

Gerasa

Temples of Artemis, Tyche, Zeus, Hera, Dionysius

(Dushara) and Nabataean gods. Nymphaeum. Two theatres. Hippodrome. The Hellenised local cults existed alongside a devotion to Isis and Serapis. There was also the universal cult of the Emperor.¹⁷⁵

Gergesa

A temple called the House of Nebo (b.A.Z. 11b).¹⁷⁶

Mount Gerizim

See above.

Gilgal/Galgala

Eusebius (Onom. 66.5, cf. t.Sota 8.6) refers to twelve stones held in reverence by "mortals" (pagans).¹⁷⁷

Golanitis

At Na'aran, a spring was covered by a Roman nymphaeum and a Roman eagle was also discovered there. At Kafr Naffakh a statue of a man carrying a shield decorated with a Medusa head was found.¹⁷⁸

Hefer Valley

Pagan tombs of the Roman period. Dionysian motifs are much in evidence.¹⁷⁹

Hermon, Mount

Temples. At Har Senaim, 15 km east of Qiryat Shmoneh, a

Roman temple was discovered close to the ruins of one from the Hellenistic period. The altar bore the figure of the sun-god Helios. At H. Dura a small stone temple existed from the Hellenistic period until the sixth or seventh centuries A.D. The mountain of Hermon was sacred (cf. Eusebius, Onom. 20.9-14) and home of numerous gods. Over twenty Hellenistic and Roman temples and cult sites have thus far been located, some in excellent repair, like that of Ein Harshah. ¹⁸⁰

Hippos (Susitha)

Dushara may have been worshipped here. A basalt fragment with the letters ΔΟΥΚΑΡΕΙ was discovered in 1974.

Ovadiah suggests that Zeus and Hera, depicted on coins of the city, correspond with the Nabataean Dushara and Allat. There was a theatre and nymphaeum. Tiberias and pagan Hippos existed in enmity on the two shores of the Sea of Galilee (Lam. Rab. 19). A marble panel depicting a dolphin was given a Christian use as part of a chancel screen. The dolphin was a symbol of Atargatis. ¹⁸¹

Joppa (Jaffa)

The fetters which bound Andromeda were exhibited here along with a spring which was tinged red, supposedly as a result of Perseus washing his bloodied hands in the water after slaying the sea monster. The bones of the sea monster had also been on display until they were removed to Rome by Scaurus (c.60 B.C.). A tomb door depicting a

man with an actor's mask is now in the Israel Museum (no. 48-1421). 102

K^efar Kesem

A pagan holy tree. 103

Kerak

Nabataean temple. 104

Khirbet al-Mafjar

Head and parts of arms of Minerva statue. 105

Khirbet Brak

Nabataean temple. Worship of Atargatis. 106

Khirbet edh-Dherih

Nabataean temple. 107

Khirbet el-Harrawi

Temple of Athena. 108

Khirbet el-Mesheirfeh

Nabataean temple. 109

Khirbet et-Tannur

Nabataean temple. Bust of Atargatis as vegetation and dolphin goddess. The inner shrine has reliefs of

Zeus-Hadad and Atargatis. Sculptured objects include a Tyche with the Zodiac. 190

Khirbet Miyumas

A temple. 191

Legio/Maximianopolis

Large station for Roman troops. An officer of the VI Ferrata set up an altar in the reign of Elagabalus. Theatre. A bone carving of a male figure (Dionysius, Dushara?) holding a cornucopia was discovered here. A Roman military castra was cleared on the small hill earlier this century. Tombs date from the third and fourth centuries. In a cave, a bronze patera was found which depicts the face of Pan (Israel Museum, no.43-377a). 192

Mahaiv

Nabataean temple. A Helios or Mercury figure was found here. 193

Main

Nabataean temple. 194

Maiumas

Identified by the rabbis as the centre of a water festival which included orgiastic rites (Sifre Num. 131; b.Sanh. 67a). It is called Beth Marzeah on the Madaba

mosaic map (מרזח means "cultic feast" or "revelry").¹³⁵

Mampsis

The necropolis has yielded three identical pendants in the form of dolphins, a small bronze bust of Zeus-Hadad, and the image of Allat-Aphrodite. Two representations of Eros carved in bone were also found here. A room with bands of frescoes depicting Leda and the Swan, Eros and Psyche and people walking with various cult objects in their hands, was also discovered.¹³⁶

Marwa

A Roman tomb indicates that there was a pagan presence in this region. On the walls are paintings of Pluto and Persephone with Cerberus.¹³⁷

Neapolis

Nymphaeum. Temples. Worship of Artemis and Tyche/Astarte. A floor mosaic, now in the Israel Museum (no. K-28054), from a Roman villa.¹³⁸

Panias/Caesarea Philippi

In antiquity, a spring in a large cave was one of the River Jordan's principal sources. The cave was sacred to Pan (τὸ πᾶνιον). A temple of Augustus was erected by Herod the Great (Josephus, Ant. xv.363). Niches in the cliff face where the cave is located were cut in the Roman period for cultic statues. Gymnastic competitions

were held here. 199

Pella

Two temples. 200

Petra

A wealth of pagan finds, including a bust of Zeus-Hadad, a wing-headed Hermes, rectangular basalt blocks symbolic of Dushara, and dolphin carvings. The baths of Petra had a depiction of a divinity, perhaps Atargatis, on a sea monster. The Turkomaniyeh tomb inscription refers to the banquet benches there as being the consecrated inviolable possession of Dushara. The temple of Qasr Bint Far'un, a shrine of Dushara, is well-known. The Great High Place of Zibb Atuf was the spiritual centre of the Nabataean kingdom. Atargatis/Allat was certainly worshipped here, along with Zeus-Hadad and Dushara. 201

Philadelphia

Temples of Heracles/Melkart and Astarte/Tyche. Acropolis. Nymphaeum. Theatre. Odeum. Sanctuary to Zeus. 202

Ptolemais

On the evidence of coins: temples of Zeus, Tyche, Nemesis, Artemis, Hadad, Perseus, Atargatis, Pluto, Persephone, Serapis, Cybele. Baths of Aphrodite. Annual festival. Gymnasium. The mausoleum of Memnon was

located on the Belus River (Josephus, B.J. 11.188). 203

Qasr Rabbah

Nabataean temple. 204

Rabbath Moab

Temples of Ares and Poseidon. 205

Er-Ram

A small shrine of Allat. A temple of the second century A.D. 206

Raphia

Worship of Isis. Hill thought the town was very influenced by the Dionysian legend. An epitaph of the fifth century A.D. shows that paganism continued here well into the Byzantine era. Sozomen (Hist. Eccles. vii.15) mentions pagan temples at Gaza and Raphia. 207

Rawafa

A temple. 208

Scythopolis (Beth Shean)

Temples of Zeus (probably Zeus Akraios, "of high peaks"), the Dioscuri and possibly a large temple of Artemis. Theatre. Hippodrome. The place was associated with the birth of Dionysius. His nurse, Nysa, was said

to have been buried here. The well-known pottery figurine allegedly depicting a Madonna and child is much more likely to be a representation of Nysa suckling Dionysius. Coins of the city show Nysa on a throne nursing the infant. The temples here indicate the existence of magnificent public cults, while numerous figurines and statuettes found are testimony to private devotion. Two marble heads of monumental statues, one of Athena-Minerva (Israel Museum, no. 78-505) and one of Aphrodite (Israel Museum, no. 78-506) were found at nearby Tel Naharo, though their provenance was Scythopolis. A shrine of Emperor Hadrian and his consort was discovered near the city, along with a statue of the emperor. A maenad in motion and a large Hermes or Meleager with sheep or dog were also found. Scythopolis, known to the rabbis as Beth Shean, was one of the four cities released from tithes by Rabbi Judah (J. Dem. 2.22c). A Greek dedicatory inscription to the semitic god Azeizos was recovered in the Beth Shean valley. A sarcophagus of the second century showing Leda and the Sawn, hunting scenes and a depiction of Achilles and Skyra, is now in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem. 209

Sebaste

Temples of Augustus and Kore. Forum. Theatre. Stadium. Temple of Pan. Sebaste was an important centre of the imperial cult from the early third century. In the

stadium there was a statue of Kore. Elsewhere, an altar with an inscription to Lady Kore has been found. A Roman mausoleum has been uncovered. Statues of Hercules, Dionysius, Apollo and Kore-Persephone indicate where the city's religious devotion was directed. The synagogue mosaic of Rehov lists eighteen towns in the territory of Sebaste that were exempted from tithes by the rabbis: these must then have been pagan or Samaritan settlements. A stone relief showing a cap of the Dioscuri, the helmet decorated with a star over a wreath, is now in the Rockefeller Museum, while an ivory of Zeus and Ganymede is exhibited in the Israel Museum (no. 35-3650).²¹⁰

Seeia

Temple of Baal-Shamin.²¹¹

Sycaminum

A large Byzantine gem has been found depicting Tyche, with the inscription: ΕΥΤΥΧΩC ΤΗ ΚΥΡΑ ΑΝΘΟΥΧΗ.²¹²

Terebinthus (Mamre)

An oak grove and sacred well. A pre-Constantinian structure had been exposed, now dated to the time of Herod. Three walls of the shrine survive as they were built into the Constantinian church, also a fragment of the altar. The door was to the north. Objects found here include a stele of Hermes, the head of a statue of Dionysius and a number of other cultic pieces. A large

Roman town existed near the site. For a fuller discussion, see below.²¹³

Thauatha (Tel en-Nuqeid)

A temple.²¹⁴

Tiberias

See above.

Tur Shimeon

Nearby, at modern Turmus Aiya, a third century marble sarcophagus, depicting Dionysius and the four seasons, was discovered (now in the Rockefeller Museum). This probably indicates the presence of a pagan population in the vicinity.²¹⁵

Tyre

This is not, strictly speaking, a city of Palestine, but it was an important pagan centre bordering Galilee. Here Baal-Shamin, Astarte, Heracles-Melkart and probably Apollo were worshipped. The cultural weight of Tyre would have rested heavily on Galilee.²¹⁶

This summary indicates only the centres of Gentile pagan life known to us through literary and archaeological data at the time of writing, and will need constant updating. What this summary indicates, as far as this study is concerned, is that paganism was very

prevalent indeed in Palestine prior to Constantine. Gentile pagans lived all over the country. Even in Jewish Galilee, there was a pagan presence in Diocaesarea and Tiberias. Galilee was, moreover, surrounded by pagan cult centres: Tyre, Ptolemais, Carmel, Legio, Scythopolis, Gadara, Emmatha, Hippos, Gergesa, Cadasa. No Jewish village in Galilee was over thirty kilometres away from one of these cultic centres, and if we include Diocaesarea and Tiberias in the list, the maximum distance is cut by half, at least for lower Galilee. Jews lived almost as closely with Gentile pagans as did the Samaritans. The whole of Palestine may have been host to a mass of sacred pagan sites: trees, springs, hills and caves. An intensive study of paganism in Palestine has yet to be undertaken. In the meantime, this summary shows that it is important to bear pagans in mind when we think about the possible origins of later Christian holy sites.

Not only does this long chapter have a negative purpose in arguing that there is almost no evidence for the existence of Jewish-Christians in Palestine, it has now set the scene for what would happen in the fourth century. It may also provide a context for further information concerning Palestine in the third. It therefore acts as a foundation for all that follows. Only now can we consider Constantine and the beginnings of

Christian pilgrimage.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONSTANTINE AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIAN

HOLY SITES IN PALESTINE

At the end of the third century we have in Palestine a demographic situation in which pagans, Jews, Samaritans and some Christians lived in their own general regions where their own customs could be preserved, though there was some intermixture of populations in cities like Caesarea and Gaza. The archaeological and literary evidence would suggest that villages tended to be one thing or another: Jewish, Samaritan, pagan, even Christian, but as yet there is no instance of a rural community in which the religious pluralism of the cities can be ascertained. Christians are clearly a small part of the population and are found predominantly in cities.

Fifty years later, in the middle of the fourth century, the situation is quite different. Aelia Capitolina has been given its ancient name "Jerusalem". Splendid Christian basilicas stand in place of pagan temples. Churches are under construction everywhere. Jewish and Samaritan sites are visited by Christians from abroad who pray at sites they consider to have been sanctified by God; literally, heaven appears to have descended to earth. From being a small, clandestine community, focused on the life to come, who lived in constant fear of physical torture and death, the Church

is now comfortable in its worldly existence. It is confident, propertied and powerful. It administers the sacred zones and the relics of saintly bodies to which Christian pilgrims flock in their thousands to pray.

To explain this astonishing turn in history, and to discover the origins of the concept of the Christian "holy place", we must turn to Emperor Constantine. Only then, with an understanding of the general course of history, can we begin to examine the details of specific holy sites which Bagatti and Testa consider to have been in the hands of sectarian Jewish-Christians before their development by the "Gentile" Church.

Constantine

If the accounts about Constantine's conversion¹ bear some resemblance to reality, we must conclude that the primary reason for Constantine's new belief in the power of the Christian God was that this God provided him with military victory; after all, the message was: in hoc signo vinces (Vita Const. 1.28) and this is precisely what Constantine did. The "sign" itself is identified by Lactantius as the "sign of Christ" (De Mortibus xlv). Eusebius informs us that Constantine saw it drawn in the sky in light, whereupon "the Christ of God" appeared with the same sign (Vita Const. 1.28-29). Despite the possible contradictions between the two accounts, there can be no real doubt that the sign was simply a cross².

Constantine then had the Christian symbol incorporated into his standard, the labarum, with the chi-rho abbreviation used by scribes to mean "good"³. For the emperor, and perhaps to others before him, the chi-rho also stood for Χριστός since the letters chi and rho were the first two letters of the name. The labarum became a symbol of the alliance between God and Constantine⁴. It effected a kind of magical power over the battlefield.

Constantine may not have been quite the Christian that modern Christians would have liked. He murdered his son, Crispus, and his wife, Fausta, and he appears not to have felt extreme discomfort in maintaining the ancient pagan rituals of Rome; but there is a danger of using sophisticated theological and ethical criteria to assess the commitment felt by this emperor towards his God. The commitment itself owed much to pagan devotion to a chosen deity, but there was nothing irresolute about it; the result of this commitment was a radically changed world. Emperors in the third century had pointed to the existence of Christians as the prime reason for the Empire's pitiful state. As is well-known, the Christians had become the scapegoats blamed for the third century's economic instability, civil unrest, war, rebellion, moral decline and shortages. The logic was simple: the gods despised the Christians, who would not sacrifice, and since worldly harmony could result only when the gods were content with the way in which human beings

worshipped them, peace would not be attained until Christians paid homage to the gods in the correct manner; if they refused outright, then it was necessary for them to die in order that the gods, in their indignation, would cease from causing further calamities on earths. Constantine, pondering on this rationale, noted that many of the emperors who had lavished great persecutions upon the Christians had died premature deaths (Vita Const. 1.28), meaning that whatever deity was paramount in heaven did not approve of their efforts to eradicate Christianity; it was, therefore, the Christian God who should be worshipped. He promptly decided to side with the very people the Empire had blamed for its troubles for generations. After heralding his new allegiance in the battlefield, Constantine won victory. He was convinced.

While T. D. Barnes considered that Christianity was no "small and insignificant sect" but "powerful and respectable long before it acquired an imperial champion", the evidence in support of such an assertion is wanting. As was shown above, the evidence of Christian presence in Palestine does not require us to envisage a very sizeable, widespread or potent community. Most scholars would disagree with Barnes' supposition. Bury estimates that at the beginning of the fourth century four-fifths of the Empire was pagan, and dubs Constantine's policy of religious change "the most

audacious act ever committed by an autocrat in disregard of the vast majority of his subjects"⁷. Constantine was "one of history's great surprises", as Lane Fox puts it⁸; he considers that the Christians constituted only four or five percent of the Empire's population⁹. Even this may be a generous figure. The army, the intelligentsia, the aristocracy and, most importantly, the innumerable peasants were almost entirely pagan. Christianity was found mainly among the urban artisan and mercantile classes¹⁰. Despite speculations based on the fact that Constantine's sister was named Anastasia, Constantine's faith was neither part of a trend, nor was it born of family preference, as Vogt has shown¹¹. It was a personal decision, the source of which returns to the theology of Milvian Bridge: the Christian God won him battles. The form of prayer he gave to his soldiers aptly sums up the nature of his own beliefs:

We acknowledge you, the only God.
We own you as our king and implore your aid.
By your favour we have gained the victory.
Through you we are mightier than our enemies.
We give you thanks for your past benefits
and trust you for future blessings.
Together we pray to you and ask you to long
preserve for us, safe and triumphant,
the Emperor Constantine and his pious sons.

Eusebius, Vita Const. iv.20

This prayer was said on Sundays by all his troops, even if they were pagan. The language is therefore characteristically obscure, but the theology is not. Constantine believed that by honouring the Christian God,

he was both invincible on the battlefield and guaranteed longevity. Christianity would henceforth be the religion of Roman emperors (excepting Julian); Constantine thereby elevated a faith found among the urban middle class to the status of the Empire's most favoured religion. Truly, the last became first. Even though this Cinderella did not defeat her step-sisters overnight, Constantine's policy toward other religions both illuminates the strength of his own commitment to the Christian God, and points to a primary reason for the establishment of Christian "holy places".

The history of the destruction of paganism by Christianity is by no means a simple story¹². The legislation on this subject is repetitive and, in the end, intransigent. Constantine acted to restrict pagan rites (Cod. Theod. xvi.10.1-6). The suppression of pagan cult sites was gradually intensified and edicts were reiterated, though the process was interrupted by the apostate reign of Julian. Eventually, on November 14, 435, the emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian^{III}_λ would interdict:

all persons of criminal pagan mind from the accursed immolation of victims, from damnable sacrifices, and from all other such practices that are prohibited by the authority of the more ancient sanctions.

Cod. Theod. xvi.10.25

Temples and shrines that, against all odds, survived were then to be destroyed and cult sites to be purified by the erection of the sign of the "venerable Christian

religion": the cross. The punishment for the infringement of the law was death¹³.

There has been a tendency among scholars to show some surprise that paganism persisted, but at the same time to suggest that the edicts were sound and fury signifying little, as if paganism was, at the beginning of the fourth century, ready to lie down and die without much encouragement. Jones, for example, thinks that the profusion of edicts against the pagans shows that they were laxly enforced¹⁴, but this does not follow. The proliferation of legislation against paganism indicates rather that paganism was a multiplication of varied and flexible belief systems with stubborn roots that could not be pulled out with one tug. The task facing Constantine and his successors was great. To overturn paganism was, it must have seemed, near impossible; practicable only because God would grant the impossible to his faithful servants. As Lane Fox has argued, paganism was still as strong as it had ever been. Personal devotion to one or more gods was customary. The Roman aristocracy, who sustained an ossified religion closely associated with the glorious history of Rome (cf. Symm, Rel. iii) and who gave their children a sound classical education, did not dictate the essential character of paganism at this time. Nor was this to be found among the urban affluent or the army, who participated in the esoterica of mystery cults. The

fundamental basis of the power of paganism was to be found amid the masses: the workers of the land, the lower classes who constituted the bulk of the Empire's population. Of course, use of the word "paganism" is not meant to imply that there was a coherent or self-conscious pagan religion as such but, as G. Fowden puts it, "Paganism" was just a collection of ethnic polytheisms.¹⁵ The term was an invention of the Christian apologists who needed some way of grouping together all non-Christian and non-Jewish belief systems into a convenient package. The word "pagan" means, in substance, "peasant"; a "pagan" was an inhabitant of a rural district or pagus, and then any "countryman"¹⁶. It came to refer to one who, to the Christian mind, thought like a peasant, one who believed in the old gods, though educated pagans called themselves, if anything, "Hellenes", tracing their cultural roots to the glorious past of Greece. The peasants themselves seem not^{to} have used any form of self-reference to categorise their religious devotions, which were based on beliefs which stretched back millenⁿ_{ia}. The Graeco-Roman pantheon had been an overlay which rested on entrenched local traditions and ancient deities. These traditions and deities were closely connected with agriculture, so that in undermining the religious life of the rural population the Christian authorities had to sweep away the fabric into which the life of the countryside was woven. The peasants believed that honouring the agrarian gods

ensured good harvests and fertile animals: in short, survival. The sophisticated among the urban populations of the Empire may have been inclined to find the issue of life after death critical. Their swap from the mysteries of Isis or Mithras to the mysteries of the Christian faith cannot have been too traumatic; the goals of salvation and spiritual longevity were more or less the same. For the peasants, however, it was life in this world that was of ultimate concern, and their gods were integrally connected with earthly regeneration, fertility and bounty. Thus, when the Christians, especially the later monks, began destroying country shrines, Libanius protested that these were "the soul of the countryside" that gave farm labourers hope (Lib. Orat. xxx.9-10.19).

It is not, then, at all surprising that paganism persisted, and we do not have to suppose that this was the result of official apathy. In Gaul, numerous pagan sanctuaries continued to be centres of popular religious devotion. Only under the intolerant reign of Gratian (367-383) did Martin of Tours succeed in Christianising the countryside there with any degree of success; the great forest sanctuaries were gradually replaced by Christian churches¹⁷. In the last decade of the century John Chrysostom urged Christian landowners in Antioch to try to convert their peasants by building churches and appointing priests on their land¹⁸. Even within important cities paganism continued. Augustine records

the destruction of temples in the city of Carthage as late as 399 (Civ. Dei xviii.54). This is far from being an isolated instance. To take Palestinian examples alone, we have a sixth-century reference to polytheists in the city of Caesarea (Procopius of Caesarea, Secret History xi.26); Marinus, the Neoplatonist who succeeded Proclus as the head of the Platonic Academy in Athens, was a Palestinian from Neapolis, which shows that paganism existed there at the end of the fifth century; Gaza and Raphia were well-known as pagan strongholds. At the end of the fourth century Gazan pagans were "discouraged" from their beliefs by means of armed force, torture, mass executions and the destruction of the temple of Marnas (Vita Porph. 35-51, 63-75, 99, 103). In some places paganism continued until the time of Islam. In 830 the pagan people of Carrhae were threatened by the Caliph and saved themselves from massacre by claiming to be Sabians¹⁹, a tolerated religious sect.

The fact that paganism persisted and that legislation at the end of the fourth century would punish those who sacrificed as if they had committed treason (Cod. Theod. xvi.10.11-12) can serve to cast Constantine in a liberal light. Some scholars have seen Constantine as a perfunctory Christian not completely convinced of his faith. For Jacob Burckhardt, the emperor was essentially areligious, an ambitious politician²⁰. To Piganiol he was a syncretistic philosophical monotheist²¹. Jones thought him prone to accept the

opinions of advisors²². More recently, Alístair Kee has argued that Constantine used Christianity as part of a grand strategy, but was not a Christian himself²³. Indeed, the emperor did retain solar symbolism as part of his personal iconography but, as N. H. Baynes has shown, this is not at all inconsistent with his being a Christian at heart²⁴. Constantine accepted the title of Pontifex Maximus, one which was not spurned until Gratian, who withdrew public money from the Senate House²⁵, but Gratian acted with the solid support of those in high places. Had Constantine attempted to quash paganism thoroughly and absolutely at the beginning of the fourth century, he would have incited civil war, especially in the West. He was too much the military strategist to ignore this. As it was, he did an extraordinary amount to abolish pagan belief, but he set "safe" limits. In the West and Italy, where pagan belief appears to have been firmer among those that counted than in the East, he made no serious attempt to enforce the prohibition on sacrifices he made in the East (Eusebius, Triac. Or. vii.1ff). Firmicus Maternus exhorted Constans, Constantine's son, to stop them in 343 (De Err. Prof. Rel. xvi.4; xxviii.1ff). Constans had extended Constantine's prohibition to Italy two years previously (Cod. Theod. xvi.10.2) but, like his father, he trod a fine line between religious aims and political prudence.

It may be perfectly true that Constantine's faith

was not all that ~~it could~~ it could have been by modern standards, but if he blurred the distinction between Sol/Apollo and Christ at times, whether out of personal conviction or political acumen, it does not appear to have affected his commitment to the Church or to have inhibited his understanding of himself as God's latest apostle. Constantine believed that his particular mission was to make his subjects virtuous²⁶, and one could not be virtuous and pagan. In his Speech to the Assembly of the Saints, probably delivered in Antioch in 325²⁷, Constantine declared that God had given him success and, in return, he was bound to convert all the wicked and unbelieving (Triac. Or. xi.1). After defeating Licinius, Constantine expressed the view that God had searched for him and chosen him to carry out a divine purpose:

I myself, then, was the instrument whose services he chose and esteemed suited for the accomplishment of his will. Accordingly, beginning at the remote Britannic ocean ... through the aid of divine power I banished and utterly removed every form of evil which prevailed, in the hope that the human race, enlightened through my instrumentality, might be recalled to a due observance of the holy laws of God, and at the same time our most blessed faith might prosper under the guidance of his almighty hand.

Eusebius, Vita Const. ii.28²⁸

He wrote a letter in his own hand on the errors of paganism (Vita Const. iv.8). He believed that he was elected to serve God and bring "healing" to his pagan subjects (Vita Const. ii.55). The terms he uses to grant

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pagans freedom of conscience were, as Paul Keresztes has observed, "grudging"²³; temples are "shrines of falsehood" and pagans are "those who delight in error" (Vita Const. 11.56).

To understand the extent of Constantine's success in his policy towards religions other than his own, it is more illuminating to concentrate on the positive results of his policies rather than on the fact that paganism managed to survive. It is significant that, by the middle of the fourth century, prior to Julian's reactionary reign, pagan defiance of Christian religious policy required courage. Eunapius (Vita Soph. 491) reports how a praetorian prefect visited Athens in 358 and "boldly" sacrificed and made a round of the shrines. This was understood to be both unusual and daring. Pagans who wished to preserve their sacred shrines pretended on occasion to be Christians. A sun-worshipper named Pegasus, for example, became a Christian bishop in order to protect the temple at Ilion. This bishop showed the young Julian the shrine of Hector, the temple of Athena of Troy and the tomb of Achilles, but did not dare say outright that he was a worshipper of Graeco-Roman deities. Julian was left to note that the bishop failed to cross himself to ward off evil spirits or whistle through his teeth²⁴. If a man like Pegasus was forced to take such extreme action to protect sacred sites, to be a dissident afraid of admitting his true belief, only thirty years after Constantine defeated Licinius, it

shows that imperial policies toward paganism had been more draconian than lax, at least in the East. This situation could not have come about unless Constantine himself, followed by his sons, enforced his religious policy with some stringency. We may yet have to recognise to what extent Julian's short reign revived pagan confidence and impeded the progress of Christianising measures; the tradition of belittling Julian's successes is a long one. The reign of Valens was surprisingly tolerant, which perhaps shows that he felt a need to tread warily after the pagan renaissance. Only under Gratian was the Constantinian religious policy continued and reinforced with greater severity. Had there been no apostate interruption in this policy, Constantine may well have appeared much less the liberal. Constantine struck the Goliath of paganism with a mighty blow, but he did not try, for political and religious reasons, to exterminate it. The political reasons, that he did not wish to incite rebellion, have already been mentioned. Constantine's religious reason was that although paganism was plainly false, pagans had to undertake the "contest for immortality" voluntarily, not from fear of punishment (Vita Const. ii.55; 57-58, 60). The destruction of pagan shrines was, then, seen by Constantine as persuasion rather than coercion.

All the same, it would be naive to accept Constantine's benign view of his actions without

reservation. Eusebius' account does not give us any indications that the emperor's persuasive methods were gentle. Entrances to temples in several cities were left stripped of their doors and exposed to the weather; the tiling of others was removed and roofs destroyed. Bronze statues were paraded contemptuously through public places. Gold and silver statues were confiscated. Emissaries from Constantine went throughout the Empire ordering pagan priests to bring their idols from temples. The statues were stripped of ornaments and exhibited; any precious metals were scraped off, melted down, and taken with the emissaries (Vita Const. iii.54). Constantine made a special onslaught on the grove and temple of Aphaca on Mount Lebanon, destroying the building there with military force (Vita Const. iii.56). The temple of Asklepius at Aegae, Cilicia, where thousands flocked continually to be healed, was razed to the ground by Constantine's soldiers³¹.

The pagans, faced with the ruin and desecration of their temples everywhere, immediately agreed, according to Eusebius, that the worship of idols was pure folly. To what extent "persuasion" played a role in extracting this admission from the pagan population is, however, unknown. The demoralising effect of the destruction of shrines and sanctuaries upon pagans should not be underestimated. Contrary to their expectations, their gods did not seem to put up much of a struggle against the iconoclasts; spectacular miracles did not occur to

deter them. There were no thunderbolts from Zeus to stop the Christians; the gods themselves appeared to surrender unconditionally to one that was mightier. Libanius admits that the destruction of temples in Syria had made converts (Orat. xxx.28). In The Life of Porphyry (Marc. Diac., Vita Porph. xli, Georgian text), the emperor reasons that when the pagans of Gaza saw their temple treated with contempt they would abandon their errors and embrace Christianity. The emissaries of Constantine may well have met with considerable success. Eusebius says that "every gloomy cave, every hidden recess, afforded the emperor's emissaries easy access: the inaccessible and secret chambers, the innermost shrines of the temples, were trampled by the feet of soldiers" (Vita Const. iii.57). Nevertheless, pagan caves, trees, springs and hills were everywhere, as was shown in the last chapter, and it is inconceivable that every cave and every recess was visited by Constantine's men. We know that paganism persisted, and people continued to visit shrines. Pan's caves in Attica drew pilgrims throughout the first part of the fourth century (Dio Chrys. i.52.6). This practice of pilgrimage was a deeply embedded part of pagan piety, a part which Constantine cannot have failed to notice, and it is significant that, with Constantine, the era of Christian pilgrimage began.

Palestine and Pilgrimage

When Constantine, then Emperor of the West, defeated his rival Licinius on 18 September 324 at Chrysopolis, he took over rule of the East, which included Syria-Palestine, and immediately set about a programme of Christianisation. There was a purge of prominent pagans (Vita Const. ii.18). He forbade officials to sacrifice, as was the custom, before official business; in fact, all sacrifice was banned, despite protests and infringements of the law (Vita Const. ii.44ff). Governors and financial officials were to co-operate with bishops in providing funds for churches. No cult statues were to be erected, nor were pagan oracles to be consulted. Treasures were confiscated from pagan temples and shrines, and cult centres were suppressed (Eusebius, Triac. Or. viii,1ff)³².

Constantine began construction in Palestine of four magnificent buildings which would become awe-inspiring pilgrim attractions. These would commemorate four events connected with Christ: the place of his birth at Bethlehem, his death and resurrection on Golgotha, his ascension on the Mount of Olives, and his pre-incarnation appearance to Abraham at the terebinth of Mamre. As Wilkinson has shown, the first three of these were closely connected with the creeds central to the Christian faith³³. Constantine's mother, Helena, took an active role in identifying the "right places" for the

edifices, which were closely modelled on the basilicas formerly used for the imperial cult. She chose sites in Bethlehem and on the Mount of Olives, while the emperor's mother in law, Eutropia, chose Terebinthus as a fitting place for a church. There is no reason to believe, despite the legends that grew up about Helena during subsequent centuries, that these women were more than pawns in Constantine's grand plan. Eusebius' speech addressed to Paulinus, Bishop of Tyre, makes it clear that the emperor was in charge (Hist. Eccles. x.4).

The reasons for Constantine's building programme were not all born of an excess of piety. It would seem that when the emperor turned his eye to Palestine, he saw the opportunity of creating a focal point for the Christians of the Empire. If pilgrimage was characteristic of popular pagan religion, it would be characteristic also of the new Christianity Constantine hoped would supersede the former erroneous ways. Devotees of pagan gods made trips to certain sacred shrines, which were places connected with the deity's mythology, sites revealed as particularly special to a god, or simply temples³⁴. Many of these were the caves, groves, springs and hills upon which Constantine's soldiers wished to trample. The majority had been recognised as being numinous for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. It was common to have festivals associated with these sites, which were attended by vast multitudes of pilgrims. People went to pray at healing

sanctuaries or sacrifice on altars adjacent to the sites. Many caves claimed their status from the fact that the infant Zeus apparently sheltered in them: Ida in Crete, for example, or the cave near the temple of Zeus in Aizana, Phrygia. At Thibilis, North Africa, the magistrates processed for ten miles outside the town and climbed to a cave of the god Bacax. Temples were also visited: the shrine of Hera on Samos, Asklepius on Cos, or Plutonium by the caves outside Nyssa³⁵.

Constantine clearly wanted to create new shrines in Palestine that would invalidate such powerful places. Later pilgrims would recognise implicitly that a contest was being waged. As Jerome wrote to Marcella in A.D. 400:

With what words, with what voice, can we describe the Saviour's cave? And that manger where the Babe cried is to be honoured more by deep silence than by feeble speech. Behold, in this small hole in the earth the Founder of the heavens was born, here he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, here seen by the shepherd, here shown by the star, here worshipped by the wise men, and this place, I think, is holier than the Tarpeian rock, where traces of its having been frequently struck by lightning show that it displeases the Lord.³⁶

In constructing temples to his God, Constantine was simply being traditional. Generals of the past had paid homage to their deities by building temples and instigating cults in Rome³⁷. Constantine naturally began in this city and endowments were provided for St. John the Lateran and the Sessorian basilica (via Helena) but his architectural "deluge of Christian publicity", as Lane Fox puts it³⁸, was to surpass anything ever seen.

Certainly, patronage of public and religious buildings was a noble virtue proper to great princes, as it had been since Alexander, and no pagan could have found it sinister at first that Constantine should continue the norm, but he went beyond all standards. No other Roman emperor sent his soldiers through the eastern Empire stripping religious shrines of their precious metals, and had he not done so it is difficult to see from where his bottomless supply of funds could have come. Spending on public buildings could, moreover, cover a multitude of sins. It is surely no coincidence that after Constantine executed Crispus and forced Fausta to commit suicide, Helena made her pilgrimage to Palestine and spent wildly on constructing shrines to the Christian God. While Constantine himself lay low, his beloved mother, by means of her reverential trip, showed the world the intense piety and generosity of the imperial family.

Some years later, much encouraged by Helena's example, it became fashionable among those who had sufficient means for such a venture, to travel to the land where Jesus lived. It was quite natural for those recently converted from paganism to think along such lines.

Palestine had already been visited by Christians, but one cannot call these visits "pilgrimages" as such. For example, at the end of the second century, Melito of Sardis wrote that he visited the East and arrived at "the

place where it all happened" (Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iv,26,14), Palestine, where he managed to acquire a list of Old Testament books. Nothing is said of specific sites, and it appears that Melito's purposes in Palestine did not include veneration of these. Furthermore, there is no reason to presume that they existed. In Jerusalem the location of the place where Jesus was crucified was pointed out to him, but it does not appear to have been his goal to pray there. Prayer is the one critical and distinctive factor in the definition of Christian pilgrimage which distinguishes it from other forms of travel^{as}. Melito himself said that the earthly Jerusalem had no esteem, since it was here that God was slain (Hom. lxx). Alexander (A.D.213) and Origen (c.230) made some attempt to see places where Biblical events took place, but again they appear to have made no special journeys to specific holy sites in order to pray. They were interested in the cities of Palestine in the same way that classical scholars, ever since Herodotus, were interested in classical cities, as E. D. Hunt has argued in regard to Origen⁴⁰. Origen calls his movements around Palestine an historia: it was a kind of learned tourism, a "study tour", an investigation. Alexander, according to Eusebius, wished to "examine the historic sites" (Hist. Eccles. vi.11.2). An historia was not a pilgrimage; Jerome elucidates the motives for such a trip thus:

In the same way that they who have seen Athens understand the Greek histories better, and they who have sailed from Troy through Leucaten, and

(from) Acroceraunia to Sicily, and from there to the mouth of the Tiber (understand) the third book of Virgil, so he who has contemplated Judaea with (his own) eyes and knows the sites of the ancient cities, and knows the names of the places, whether the same or changed, will regard holy scripture more lucidly.

Praef. in Lib. Paralip.

Jerome does mention that a third-century Cappadocian bishop, Firmilianus, came "for the sake of the holy places" (De Vir. Ill. liv) but his language is undoubtedly anachronistic. It will be argued here that literary texts and archaeological remains do not show that any Christian holy places existed long before the beginning of the fourth century; most came into existence much later. In the account of the martyrdom of Origen's contemporary, Pionius, the writer indicates that Pionius' interest in Palestine was broad, and not focussed on specific sacred sites: "I saw the land which up until the present day has born witness to the wrath of God" (Mart. Pionii iv.18). It was a new phenomenon in the fourth century that Christians went to certain holy sites in Palestine to pray, and the origins of this practice owe much to pagan piety. It is therefore not surprising that Eusebius, for example, proves to have been doubtful about whether the phenomenon was theologically sound⁴¹.

Indeed, why should any Christians have gone on pilgrimages before Constantine? Palestine was unimportant in comparison with the heavenly Jerusalem

which was the reward of God's children (cf. Origen, Contra Celsum vii.28-29)⁴². Christ's kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). Even as late as A.D.309, Egyptian Christians interrogated by the then governor of Palestine, Firmilianus, claimed that they were citizens of (celestial) Jerusalem (cf. Gal. 6:26)⁴³. They were clearly uninterested in trekking to Aelia Capitolina. Suddenly, with Constantine, the Church began to focus on the earth.

It was the pagans who believed that a god's epiphany or manifestation at a certain site would mark it as sacred⁴⁴. Christians adopted this notion, with certain Lane modifications. As Fox writes:

This (Christian) patronage of caves, sepulchres and holy oak trees had a focus which was altogether different from the easy world of pagan "epiphany" ... it honoured sites of a past "appearance", not the continuing presence of gods and angels. Its foundations lay in written Scripture, not in contemporary dreams and visions.⁴⁵

The cult of the saints would also provide new holy sites, for these saints were supposed to "manifest" themselves in their relics and residues⁴⁶. The cult of the martyrs was already well established by the time Constantine came to power. He simply promoted it by assigning all tombs of martyrs to the churches as their property, regardless of where they lay (Vita Const. ii.40). The veneration of saintly bones would soon form such a critical component of churches that Emperor Julian would flippantly refer to church buildings as "charnel houses" and fume to the Christians: "You keep adding

multitudes of newly dead corpses to the corpse of long ago. You have filled up the entire world with tombs and sepulchres" (Contra Galilaeos 335c).

We can then distinguish certain key reasons why Constantine may have wanted to build Christian shrines in Palestine. He wanted to do something publicly pleasing to his God after the sordid events in the imperial family, appeasing both his Christian bishops and God at the same time. He hoped to create in Palestine a focus for Christian reverence by identifying and embellishing Christian holy sites, based on the model of pagan shrines, which would attract pilgrims.

In finding the right location for the new Christian shrines, Constantine did not utilise dreams and augurs, as a pagan emperor might have done. The manifestation of Christ would, in each place, have its foundation in the Scriptures, the "divine oracles" as Eusebius calls them. The only difficulty was to try and find a spot in contemporary Palestine that would correspond with the Biblical account. The occasional geographical vagueness of Scripture provided him with a further opportunity. As we saw above, it was his ambition to destroy paganism by persuasion. Palestine was, before the fourth century, littered with pagan sites, as well as with significant sites for Jews and Samaritans. Constantine cannot have failed to grasp that the building of spectacular Christian holy places would alter the status quo. We can

therefore conjecture that a further reason for Constantine to build Christian shrines in Palestine was to discourage the worship of religions other than Christianity in the land of the Bible. It is important to recognise just how quickly and comprehensively Palestine became a "holy land". We should also understand the means employed by the Church in order to effect a thorough Christianisation of the region. Some examination of the whole process, of which there is considerable evidence in Palestine, will help to place the formation of the Constantinian holy sites in context.

The Christian Appropriation of Sites

Perhaps the most significant factor to distinguish at the outset is the rationale given for the appropriation of the site of Jesus' tomb, for it permeated the Christians' attitude to pagan sites throughout the country. According to Eusebius, Constantine had every right to demolish the Hadrianic temple in the western part of Aelia Capitolina because the pagans had taken it from the Christians and profaned it with idolatrous practices (Vita Const. iii.27). The same was true for Terebinthus (Mamre), near Hebron: the place was "defiled" by the slaves of superstition (Vita Const. iii.52, 53). Sozomen makes it sound as if the Hellenes conspired against Christianity's sacred shrines from the very beginning: they "heaped up mounds of earth upon the holy places" and, as far as Golgotha was

concerned, effectively concealed the site with a temple. Intriguingly, he provides us with a good inverted indication of Christian self-justification regarding the appropriation of sites sacred to other religions when he writes:

A temple and a statue to Venus had also been erected on the same site by these people, for they supposed that those who went there to worship Christ would appear to bow the knee to Venus, and so the true cause of offering worship in that place would be forgotten in the course of time; and that since Christians would not be able to go to the place in safety, the temple and statue would come to be regarded as belonging exclusively to the Hellenes.

Socrates, Hist. Eccles. 11.1

Jerome says something much the same:

Indeed, the original persecutors supposed that by defiling our holy places they could deprive us of our faith in the Passion and the Resurrection.

Jerome, Ep. 1viii.3

Socrates is more specific:

After the period of his Passion, those who embraced the Christian faith greatly venerated the tomb, but those who hated Christianity, not caring for the memory of the place, covered the spot with a mound of earth, erected a temple to Venus, and put up her image there.

Socrates, Hist. Eccles. 1.17

All these reflect Eusebius' statements about Golgotha that "certain impious and godless persons" had sought to remove the "sacred cave" (Christ's tomb) from human sight, supposing in their folly that they could effectively obscure the truth (Vita Const. 111.26). Clearly, Christians believed that the pagans of Jerusalem

had covered up the tomb of Christ through malicious intent. Such a diabolical act justified fierce reprisals. Sozomen finishes his account by saying that everywhere people overturned temples and statues and erected "houses of prayer" in their place (Hist. Eccles. ii.5). We can see from literary and archaeological sources that temples were sometimes used intact as churches⁴⁷.

The causes of the development of the notion that Hadrian and the pagans deliberately obscured the tomb of Jesus will be discussed below. What is important here is to recognise in the polemic issued by the Church Fathers that the pagans stood accused of stealing the site of the tomb, which originally belonged to Christians. This would appear to suggest that Christians venerated the tomb from the earliest times. It gave the Christians the justification for claiming certain sites as theirs; it was not a question of appropriation, but of restoration. Furthermore, if pagans could do it once at Golgotha, then there was every possibility that they could do it elsewhere. Therefore, wherever there was a pagan cult place, Christians could argue that a Biblical site lay covered. In looking at the origins of Christian holy places in Palestine, this must always be borne in mind.

The archaeological remains in and around Palestine confirm those found in the wider Empire, which attest widespread destruction of temples in the fourth century,

and their employment as Christian edifices. The cathedral of Gerasa, constructed north of the south decumanus, absorbed a temple on the second terrace. On this same terrace a Christian festival was held on the anniversary of the marriage of Cana (John 2:1ff), but inscriptions indicate that this began in the cult of Dionysus/Dushara⁴⁸. Pagan traditions became incorporated into Christian life in Palestine as elsewhere.

A temple-church at Pella shows that temples were used intact as Christian churches⁴⁹. In Eboda, two churches, a north and a south, were built on the acropolis, superseding the former temples⁵⁰. The fate of the Marneion in Gaza has already been mentioned. The Eudoxiana church was completed on the same site in 408⁵¹. The pagan sanctuary of Emmatha (Hammam Gader) was also converted into a Christian site, the Baths of Elijah, by the time of the Piacenza Pilgrim⁵². A temple in Damascus was converted into the cathedral of St. John the Baptist during the reign of Theodosius I. The twelve stones of the "mortals" in Gilgal (cf. Eusebius, Onom. 66.5) were either taken by Christians or superseded by other "Christian" stones⁵³. Count Joseph of Tiberias built a church in Tiberias by converting part of the temple of Hadrian there (Epiph. Pan. xxx.12.1-9). Even the pyramids of Egypt were conceptually appropriated; they were understood to be the granaries built by Joseph to store corn during the famine (so Egeria, Pet. Diac. Lib. Y1). The nearby temple of Apis in Memphis was converted

into a church⁵⁴.

Christians appeared to have a real interest in employing sites previously utilised by pagans. A basilica of the first part of the fourth century in Dor was erected over the remains of a Hellenistic temple that had lain in ruins for several hundred years. What was probably continuing, and what needed to be suppressed by the Church, was a cult associated with a cave there. This cave had been incorporated into the temple as a subterranean adyton, a "holy of holies", as is suggested by the alignment of the cistern wall north of it and with a wall beyond the external northern aisle, as C. Dauphin has pointed out⁵⁵. The Christians "de-sanctified" the cave by turning it into a cistern.

Sites special to Jews and Samaritans fared as badly as did the shrines of the pagans. The Christians were as interested in Old Testament events as the New. The art of the catacombs in Rome demonstrates the Christians' concern with the stories and personalities of the Hebrew scriptures, which were given a particular Christian interpretation by means of typology.

Jews honoured tombs of the notable personalities of Scripture long before the Christians. The first real sepulchral interest shown by the latter concerned the grave of Peter in Rome, visited from late in the second century, at the very earliest⁵⁶. Jews had the Tombs of the Prophets (cf. Matt. 23:29) and many other burial

places for the respected dead. Cassius Dio mentions the tomb of Solomon (Hist. Rom. Epitome lxix.14.2). None of these tombs were holy places in the precisely same way as the sacred sites of the pagans. Speaking about the Tombs of the Patriarchs, the fourth century Rabbi Pinhas ben Hama sums up the Jewish tradition of venerated tombs and those interred within them:

If the fathers of the world (the patriarchs) had wished that their resting place should be in the above, they would have been able to have it there, but it is when they died and the rock closed on their tombs there below that they deserved to be called "saints". 57

Therefore, as Peter Brown explains, the Jewish tombs were "holy" because they made available to the faithful on earth a measure of the power of mercy in which they might have rested in heaven⁵⁸, but the Jewish "saints" kept a low profile⁵⁹. It was up to the Christians to develop the whole theology of saintly intercession. Finding in the countryside of Palestine the traditional Jewish tombs of the prophets, patriarchs and matriarchs, the Christians systematically took them for themselves. They were incorporated into the corpus of sacred places available for Christian prayer, for here too pious pleas would be relayed to God via the intermediary saint: Saint Rachel, Saint Abraham and so on.

The tractate Berakoth in the Babylonian Talmud (54a) preserves provisions for blessings to be recited by a Jew who sees the crossings of the Jordan, the stones in the descent of Beth Horon, the stone which Og, king of

Bashan, intended to throw against Israel, the stone on which Moses sat while Joshua was fighting Amalek, Lot's wife and the wall of Jericho which was swallowed up on the spot. These six places may have been very important, but they were by no means the only sites. Terebinthus was visited by Jews as well as pagans. The Madaba mosaic map, completed c.560-565, demonstrates how Christians used the knowledge of the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine to identify sites for pilgrimage: Elisha's fountain, for example, or "Mount Gerizim", which they placed near Jericho (cf. Gen. Rab. 32.16; Epiphanius, Pan. ix.2.4)⁶⁰. A singularly unprophetic saying⁶¹ by the early fourth-century Rabbi Judah ben Simeon ben Pazzi (Gen. Rab. 79.7) expresses the view that the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron, the Jerusalem Temple Mount and the Tomb of Joseph, near Neapolis, were, on account of their being purchased and paid for in ancient times, "the three places which the Gentiles cannot take away from Israel by saying: You have obtained them by robbery". What this tells us is that the Christians were appropriating Jewish and Samaritan sites by claiming that the Jews and Samaritans stole them at some stage in the past. This is precisely the same accusation levelled at the pagans, and as such it is very curious. In the discussion on Terebinthus below, we will see that this casts light on the Christian rationale for the appropriation of sites.

As for the Jewish reaction to the loss of their venerable tombs, a certain amount of pragmatism appears

to have prevailed. The earliest pilgrim to provide us with an account of his travels, the Bordeaux Pilgrim of A.D.333, had much success in finding Old Testament localities, from which we can infer that local Jews were reasonably helpful in pointing him in the right direction. The pilgrim visited few New Testament sites. Apart from the Constantinian basilicas, the pilgrim mentions only a spring/pool in Caesarea, known as the "Bath of Cornelius" (Itin. Burd. 585.7); the Well of Jacob, a Samaritan holy place (588); the Bethesda/Bethzatha pool, recently converted from being a sanctuary of Serapis (589); Siloam, Hadrian's tetranympheon (592); some architectural ruins known as the houses of Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate (593); a rock in the Kidron Valley, where Judas betrayed Jesus (594); a palm tree, from which people took branches upon Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (594); a hillock on the Mount of Olives, where Jesus was transfigured (595) and a tomb/cave in Bethany known as the tomb of Lazarus (597). Such sites reflect a pagan propensity to sanctify springs/pools, rocks, caves, hills and trees, but one can only speculate that some of these might have been pagan holy sites before their Christian re-classification. Certainly, the Jewish and Samaritan sites were higher on the pilgrim agenda than these geographical features.

The Jews' willingness to co-operate can be understood if we remember that most of the early pilgrims

to Palestine were affluent². It is no wonder that we hear of Jews going to great lengths to pander to the visitors. In Nazareth, for example, the Piacenza Pilgrim (A.D. 570) was shown by the local Jews how Christians were able to lift a bench in the synagogue (where, they said, Jesus learnt his ABC), while the Jews pretended to be unable to move it or drag it outside³. It was a simple trick, but one which the pilgrim fell for with much wonder. We are not told, but it is likely that the gullible visitors freely parted with a few nummi for the upkeep of the synagogue after such a miracle. Jews and Samaritans were much used as guides⁴. The finding of the Virgin's clothing in the keeping of a Jewish woman in Jerusalem may show the woman's astuteness⁵; these clothes had previously been used to effect miracles in Jewish Nazareth (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. v). The economics of early Byzantine pilgrimage, relics and sites have yet to be studied in depth, but if the medieval model is revealing for the early Byzantine world, there was clearly much money to be made in the exploitation of pilgrims. Those who catered to the Church's demand for relics must have been rewarded.

The Samaritans fared less well than the Jews, partly on account of their tendency to revolt during this period. As was mentioned above, their temple on Mount Gerizim was destroyed in the middle of the fifth century and replaced by the Church of the Theotokos, built by Emperor Zeno. Jacob's Well at Sychar (cf. John 4:5-6)

became Christian in the fourth century. Jerome records that Paula visited there in 404^{ss}. The Tomb of Joseph (cf. Acts 7:16) was also claimed by the Christians in the middle of the fourth century. The Samaritan Chronicles (Abu'l Fath 169) preserve a story that the Christians were frustrated in their attempts to appropriate the site, but this appears to be a polemical modification of history. A church, or martyrium, existed there at the time of Egeria (Pet. Diac., Lib. R). On the former Samaritan site of Mount Nebo, a Christian monastery existed prior to Egeria's visit (Egeria, Itin. xxii.1).

Pagan, Jewish and Samaritan sites and venerable tombs rapidly passed over to Christian hands. Constantine wanted churches built everywhere, and fast. In a letter to multiple addressees including the Bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius (whose diocese included Jerusalem), Constantine called for the restoration of "ruined churches". The bishops were asked to "repair or enlarge those (churches) which at present exist, or, in necessary cases, erect new ones" (Vita Const. 11.56). Funding for these operations could be demanded from as high an officer as the Praetorian Prefect. Constantine also granted lands to the churches (Vita Const. iv.28). It is not wild conjecture to assume that these lands were confiscated from pagan areas.

Moreover, the "necessary cases" must have been many. A comparison between Eusebius' Onomasticon and Jerome's

Latin translation of the work (Liber locorum) shows us that a large number of churches had been built in various Biblical localities in the course of a hundred years. This means that, in the fourth century, Christians had embarked on a determined campaign to mark Palestine as a land with a Christian character⁶⁷. Before Constantine, Palestine was not a "holy land". Constantine and those that followed him recognised that Palestine could be transformed into such. Again, the concept is rooted in the ideology of pagan epiphany which was adapted to fit Christian circumstances. Since the earthly Jesus walked over a great part of the province, and God participated in history in this specific area, the entire region was, in a sense, a place of epiphany. It was therefore pervaded with the aura of the sacred shrine. Pagan thought and Christian belief met in the development of this concept, although the idea of the Holy Land would not become firmly established until the fifth century, when Palestinian monasticism flourished and Jerusalem became a Christian capital⁶⁸. Monks and nuns living in Palestinian deserts spoke of themselves as "οἱ τῆς ἁγίας γῆς ταύτης οἰκήτορες"⁶⁹.

All through the fourth and fifth centuries, holy places were being "discovered" by the Church. The bones of the prophet Samuel were taken to Constantinople. In 412, the prophet Zechariah's bones were found and a church was built over the tomb. Habbakuk's remains were likewise conserved in a church. Those of St. Stephen were

uncovered in Kefar Gamala, along with the bones of Paul's teacher, Gamaliel, and his sons⁷⁰. Constantine's contribution to this was simply to begin the process of sanctification and appropriation. He set precedents for what would follow. The question which now arises is whether any of the sites he chose to adorn in Jerusalem and Bethlehem were, as Bagatti and Testa suggest, originally venerated by Jewish-Christians. Were they, moreover, as the Church Fathers proposed, sacred to the earliest Christians and then stolen by the pagans, Jews and Samaritans?

This question can be answered in part if we take a preliminary look at the case of Terebinthus/Mamre, which is a well-documented example of Constantine's policy in action. Bagatti and Testa ignore the site of Mamre altogether, but the contemporary attitudes to it were the same as to other Constantinian sites. It informs us about the Christianising process and the creation of a sacred edifice, and is therefore a useful model.

Terebinthus/Mamre (Ramat el-Khalil)⁷¹

The site of the sacred oak, or terebinth, of Mamre is recorded by Eusebius prior to the peace of the Church (c. 315-318) as a holy place for the local inhabitants (Dem. Evang. v.9.7), who revered it because of "those who appeared to Abraham". According to Genesis 18:1-22, these were three messengers from God. They had dinner with Abraham and announced to him that Sarah, his wife, would

bear a son. One would expect, because of the Scriptural connection, that the site would have been Jewish or Samaritan in character, but Eusebius (Onom. 124.5), Jerome Lib.loc. lxxvii.4f) and Sozomen (Hist. Eccles. ii.4) show it to be overwhelmingly pagan. According to Eusebius, the people who worship Abraham's visitors are the "ignorant" who just happen to believe the "divine oracles" (Dem. Evang. v.9) in this case. Eusebius also mentions a "picture" depicting three figures, and suggests that the middle one is Jesus. Jews also attended the festivities. Mamre is not mentioned by the rabbis as a place where blessings should be made (cf. b.Ber. 54a, above) and they describe the town only as being an important market centre in the south (J.A.Z. 1.4; 38d). Since the site appears to have been the focus of a pagan, Idumaeen cult of Abraham, the rabbis may not have advocated attendance there as it would mean Jews mixing with pagans. If their attitude was negative, they would have been continuing the outlook of the editors of Genesis who, aware perhaps that the cult of the terebinth was more of a local phenomenon than a Hebrew tradition consistent with proper worship, seem to have made an attempt to obscure the site by identifying Mamre with nearby Hebron (cf. Gen. 23:19; 35:27)⁷². As far as the Christians were concerned, however, the area was sacred because it was a location for one of Christ's pre-incarnation epiphanies (so Justin, Dial. lvi.1; Eusebius,

Vita Const. iii.53; Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. ii.4)

The most detailed account of the festivities at Mamre is provided by Sozomen. According to him, the site was visited in his day (in the middle of the fifth century) by Jews, because of the patriarch Abraham, by pagans, because of "the angels", and by Christians, because of Christ. Therefore, at this summer festival, where multitudes of people flocked from all over Palestine, Phoenicia and Arabia, some of them prayed and some of them "called upon the angels, poured out wine, burnt incense, or offered an ox, a he-goat, a sheep or a cock" (Hist. Eccles. ii:4). Sozomen says that this latter group, the pagans, placed burning lamps near Abraham's well and offered wine, gold, myrrh and incense. The festival was anything but orgiastic, as pilgrims kept themselves celibate during the course of the rites.

It is unclear how the pagans came to revere the site, or quite what their beliefs were. When Sozomen tells us that "angels" were the reason for the pagan cult, we must understand him to imply "pagan deities", although Christians usually referred to these as "demons". The pagans, who were most likely Idumaeans, must have possessed some sort of legend which described three gods coming to speak with Abraham and Sarah. In the fourth century, one of these was probably identified with Dionysius, since among the fragments discovered during the excavations of 1926-1928 was a sculpted head of this god²³. A Hermes stele has also been found

there⁷⁴. It was Herod who built the impressive sacred enclosure, the main door of which has recently been found on its northern side⁷⁵.

It was while the largely pagan celebrations were in full swing that Constantine's mother-in-law, Eutropia, arrived, observed and wrote the emperor an outraged letter of complaint. Constantine immediately wrote to Macarius, Bishop of Jerusalem, and the other bishops of Palestine. The contents of this missive are given in full by Eusebius (Vita Const. iii.52-53). They provide us with a fascinating insight into the emperor's purposes and presuppositions.

Constantine writes that Eutropia "has made known to us by letter that abandoned foolishness of impious men which had hitherto escaped detection by you" was taking place. This implies that it had been the duty of Macarius and the other bishops of Palestine to detect pagan cult places at sites which might be deemed "sacred" to the Christians. Constantine does not attempt to disguise his extreme irritation at the presence of this festival at Terebinthus, this "criminal conduct" which had "eluded" the bishops. It was "a grave impiety indeed, that holy places should be defiled by the stain of unholy impurities". The emperor continues:

She assures me that the place which gains its name from the oak of Mamre, where we find that Abraham lived, is defiled by some of the slaves of superstition in every possible way. She declares that idols, which should be destroyed completely, have been set up on the site of that tree, that

there is an altar near the spot, and that impure sacrifices are performed continually.

Eusebius, Vita Const. iii:52

Since these practices were "inconsistent with the character of our times" and "unworthy of the sanctity of the place", Constantine announced that he would dispatch a certain Count Acacius to burn all the idols, demolish the altar and punish the transgressors "in the severest manner". Interestingly, Constantine's wrath is directed solely at the pagans. Jews are ignored. Even Constantine could not accuse the Jews of "defiling" holy places, despite their alleged theft.

In his examination of the Christian holy places in Palestine, E. D. Hunt has pointed out that Eusebius presents Constantine as reviving the age of Abraham (cf. Dem. Evang. i; Hist. Eccles. i:4): the age of Constantine entailed a return to the pure religion of the patriarchs⁷⁶. The spread of Christianity through the Empire was a fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham that he would be the father of many nations. Therefore, Constantine, with his peculiar sense of destiny, saw the opportunity of pointing to the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham by converting the terebinth shrine at Mamre into a Christian holy place.

It is intriguing to speculate on how Eutropia came to be in this place at this time. The fame of Mamre was such that it attracted pilgrims from Phoenicia and Arabia, as well as Palestine; she cannot have been

ignorant of the pagan character of the festivities there. It would seem very likely indeed that Eutropia's visit was planned by someone. The shocked tenor of her letter to Constantine may have been no surprise to the emperor, who could then motivate the bishops of Palestine by implying that their negligence caused deep distress to an imperial lady, as well as to himself. It may have been the bishops, who had not yet realised how great was their authority over pagan sites, who were the most dumbfounded.

Christians may have visited the site of Mamre before Constantine; Eusebius' interpretation of the picture and his description of events may imply that he had visited the site, but this could also have been reported to him. Bagatti does not propose that there could have been any Jewish-Christian presence here. Despite the Christian exegesis of Genesis 18, they appear to have kept their distance from the celebrations of Terebinthus. Certainly, Christians cannot have owned the property before Constantine or administered it at any time before the fourth century. It is universally agreed that the veneration of this site must date at least to the time of the early Israelites⁷⁷. The negative attitude of the editors of Genesis to the cult there tends to confirm its existence. A cult of some kind may have existed long before the Iron Age, if we interpret the pottery fragments from the Early Bronze Period (2600-2000 BC) as being deposited by visitors at some kind of shrine. At

any rate, Josephus' belief that the terebinth had continued alive since the creation of the world (B.J. iv.533) may be a hyperbole not completely wide of the mark. The tree was extremely old. Jerome confirms the legend that the tree dated from the beginning of time (Lib. loc. lxx.2) but adds that it continued only up until the reign of Constantine, when it was covered over by a roof and subjected to the knives of Christian pilgrims who took mementoes of it home with them. Nevertheless, it continued to exist as a scarred stump through to the seventh century (cf. Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. 11.11).

If the tree and the site around it were both subjects of very ancient veneration, and Christians had little to do with the area before the fourth century, it is interesting that the language Constantine employs is that of restoration.

It appears right to me that this should not only be kept pure from all defilement, through your diligence, but restored to its pristine sanctity, so that, from now on, nothing may be done there apart from the performance of fitting service to him who is Almighty God and Saviour and Lord of all.

Eusebius, Vita Const. 111:53

Sozomen summarises this in his report of the letter:

he rebuked the bishops of Palestine in no measured terms, because they had neglected their duty, and had allowed a holy place to be defiled by impure libations and sacrifices.

Hist. Eccles. 11:4

The logic of these pronouncements appears to rest on the idea that a place was sanctified immediately at the

time of the epiphany of God or Jesus there, or even before; Constantine wrote in regard to Golgotha that it was a "place which has been accounted holy from the beginning in the judgement of God" (Eusebius, Vita Const. iii.30). If a place had been rendered holy then it belonged to God's chosen people, the Christians, who believed they had inherited the promises made to Israel (cf. Rom. 9:6-8; Gal. 3). This was, to the Church, self-evident. Sacred things had to be in the pure hands of the ecclesiastic authorities, who alone could guarantee the preservation of their holiness. This conferred upon the Church in Palestine enormous property rights. They could argue that while pagans stole and defiled sacred sites, Jews and Samaritans stole them simply by retaining their possession of places which should have passed over to the Church long before. For this reason, the Church could claim that the Jews stole even such a place as the Cave of Machpelah⁷⁸, because, under the new covenant, all contracts made with the previous party, the Hebrews, had passed to the Christians. In conclusion, we can never assume, on the basis of restoration language used by the Church Fathers, that a site was ever venerated by Christians before it was "discovered" by them in the fourth century.

Constantine's wishes were, of course, carried out, and the remains of the "exceptionally beautiful"⁷⁹ church built there can still be seen⁸⁰.

In summary, from being a small, persecuted group of people, Christians found themselves in a completely different situation when Constantine, who accepted belief in the efficacy of the Christian God, became emperor. Constantine was committed to defeating paganism and establishing Christianity throughout his domains, feeling himself commissioned by God to persuade the pagans of the errors of their ways. To engineer this conversion, Constantine set about a programme of demolishing pagan temples and shrines, particularly in the East, and of building churches. Adopting the practice of pilgrimage from paganism, a precedent was set in Helena's Christian pilgrimage to Palestine, where four churches were established to which pilgrims could go to pray. These did not necessarily have their origins in prior Christian veneration, as the case of Terebinthus shows, despite the restoration language employed by the Church Fathers. There is no evidence that pilgrims came to designated Christian holy places in Palestine before the fourth century¹.

Bagatti and Testa consider that in regard to the sites of the three remaining Constantinian basilicas, Jewish-Christians had kept the memory of the places from the early days of the Church until Constantine. The sites of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem are among the

most sacred to Christians; it is therefore of great interest to many to know whether these are "genuine". This question is at the heart of the following discussions, for in attempting to establish that the sites were genuine, the Bagatti-Testa school has stressed the existence of a group of Jewish-Christians in Palestine who venerated specific holy places long before the triumph of the Church. The Jewish-Christians are, then, the missing link between Gospel citations of certain places and their Byzantine veneration. If such Jewish-Christians did not exist, then the authenticity of sites is more open to question. The extent of the continuity of tradition over against that of innovation becomes a difficult issue.

It was stated in Chapter One that an empirical method of analysis provides a better assessment of sites than the approach used by Bagatti and Testa. A contextual approach seemed also to be important in establishing the correct framework for archaeological finds. This context has been sketched as regards the third- and fourth-century settings of the holy sites and must be borne in mind throughout the following discussions. Specific places alleged to have been venerated by Jewish-Christians will now be examined in detail, beginning with the three remaining sites upon which Constantinian basilicas were built.

PART THREE: INVESTIGATION OF MATERIAL

CHAPTER FIVE

BETHLEHEM¹

Eusebius says nothing about pagan worship in the Cave of the Nativity in Bethlehem². We know about it having taken place from Jerome who, in A.D. 395, wrote:

From the time of Hadrian until the reign of Constantine, for about 180 years ... Bethlehem, belonging now to us ... was overshadowed by a grove of Tammuz, that is to say, Adonis, and in the cave where once the infant Christ cried, the lover of Venus was lamented.

Ep. lviii:3³

Peter Welten has recently attempted to challenge the assumption that Tammuz-Adonis was worshipped here, arguing that there is no independent literary, numismatic or archaeological evidence for any pagan cult in Bethlehem⁴. Welten himself believes that Jerome was predisposed to thinking of the cave as being connected with Adonis because he knew of the Venus-Astarte temple in Jerusalem. The main evidence he uses to support a case for Jerome's error is iconographical; that since the motif of the wailing mother/woman and Venus lugens, found in Syrian and Phoenician contexts, was used in representations of "the slaughter of the innocents"⁵, Jerome subjected the latter to a kind of "interpretatio graeca" by suggesting there were lamentations for Adonis in the Nativity Grotto. Christian iconography, however, is not the most reliable evidence for the history of

religious traditions, since it is very well known that Christian art adopted a large part of the iconographic repertoire of the pagan world⁶. The standard motif of the wailing mother/woman, found in both pagan and Christian art, cannot have been the foundation of Jerome's report. No one in the fourth century, let alone a man of Jerome's intellect, would have been so stupid as to believe that because the iconographical form used for the depiction of a scene from the New Testament, the wailing mother/woman, was found in the classical representation of Venus-Astarte weeping for Adonis, an Adonis cult preceded Christian veneration at the site identified as the birthplace of Christ. One might equally argue that the Christian use of the form arose from the fact that a synonymous representation of Venus bewailing her lover's death was known at Bethlehem before the Church adopted the site as its own, which would only serve to verify Jerome's observation.

As an example that might corroborate this latter proposition, one could consider the case of the Panias statues. While it is never said by Eusebius, it is clear from his description of the bronze statues in Panias (Hist. Eccles. vii.18) that they represented Asklepius healing a sick woman. They were interpreted by Christians, including Eusebius, as showing Christ healing the woman "with an issue of blood" (Mark 5:25-34; Matt. 9:20; Luke 8:43-48)⁷. As a result of this interpretation Panias became a pilgrimage centre, so popular by the mid-

fourth century that the Emperor Julian had the statues replaced by one of Pan (Philostorgius, Hist. Eccles. vii.3) or perhaps of himself (Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. v.21). At the end of the sixth century it was believed that the woman, now known as Berenice (Veronica) had set up the Christian statues herself (John Malalas, Chron. v). This is a good example of how the general tendency among Christians was to speculate on the earliest Christian use of a site, and to ignore its pagan past. Where the Church Fathers do emphasise pagan "desecration" of a Christian holy place, for example at Mamre and Golgotha, it is because the pagan cults there were very well known and served their polemical purposes. That any of the Fathers would have invented a pagan cult place antedating the Christian one, just for the sake of polemic, is extremely improbable and has no known parallel.

Moreover, by the time Jerome came to write of the pagan cult in Bethlehem, he had lived and researched there for almost ten years. We can surely take it for granted that the local population would have informed him of the use made of the cave fifty years before his arrival. The parents of the older members of the population would have participated in the cult, and there may have been one or two people still living who had done so. Some supportive evidence for there being a grove comes from Cyril of Jerusalem's Catechetical Lectures

(vii.20), written in about 348, where it is said that "until lately" the district of Bethlehem was wooded. One may also conjecture from this that the Church dealt with the famous grove of Tammuz-Adonis by cutting it down.

Bagatti and Testa advocate the early use of the Bethlehem cave by Jewish-Christians^s, but it is also believed by many who come to the Nativity Grotto today that Christians venerated it as the birthplace of Jesus long before Hadrian converted the site into a cult place for the dying-and-rising god Tammuz-Adonis. The basis for this idea comes from Jerome. The pagan cult is seen to prove the antiquity of the Christian veneration, because Hadrian was apparently both curtailing Christian worship and establishing the cult of a god who shared certain common features with Jesus. The pagan cult was then a perverted continuation of the Christian, and after Constantine the Christians were able to reclaim the hallowed ground.

As we have just seen, however, restoration language used by the Church Fathers in no way implies that a site was ever in Christian hands before the fourth century. Jerome believed that this cave beside the grove was a place once sanctified by the manifestation of the Christ child, which the pagans desecrated by worshipping Tammuz-Adonis, but the statement by Jerome is not useful as evidence for the Christian origins of the site. Given the model of Mamre, his remarks would indicate that the Bethlehem cave and grove were parts of a cult site

appropriated by Christians, but nothing more.

However, there is literary evidence from the second and third centuries which would appear at first sight to connect the birth of Jesus with a cave somewhere in the vicinity of Bethlehem. The question is whether these refer to a specific cave which should be identified as the present Nativity Grotto, or is the cave motif a symbol? Was it these texts that influenced the identification of the cave in Bethlehem as the site of Christ's birth, or were they influenced by an existing venerated cave? It is not at all certain.

The earliest of the texts is Justin's Dialogue with Trypho, a work set before the end of the Bar Kochba war, although it was composed between 155 and 161. Justin wrote:

"Concerning the birth of the child in Bethlehem:- When Joseph could not find any lodging place in the village, he went to a nearby cave, and Mary gave birth to the child there and laid him in a manger, and there the Arabian magi found him. I have already quoted the words of Isaiah in which he foretold the symbol of the cave but I will repeat the passage for those who have joined you today." Then I repeated Isaiah's words, written above, and added that by these words the priests who enacted the mysteries of Mithras were urged by the Devil to say that they were initiated by Mithras himself in a place they call a "cave".

Dial. lxxvii:12-13

The last part of this informs us of Justin's purpose in reporting the tradition. He wanted to endorse a certain interpretation of Isaiah in order to show that the prophet foretold that the Messiah would be linked with

"the symbol of the cave". The Septuagint text of Isaiah 33:16 has it that "the righteous king" will dwell "in a cave of mighty rock". Headlam points out that Justin could not have derived the idea of a cave from this passage of Scripture. Indeed, "no one would have applied this passage to the birth of our Lord with which it had nothing to do, unless the tradition of a cave came first"⁹. However, "tradition" is too strong a word. At this stage it is simply an idea. Justin does not say that his assertions are based on tradition.

Having interpreted a passage in Isaiah to provide a type for a cave, Justin wished to set "the symbol of the cave" in sharp relief against the pagan mysteries of Mithras, and thereby devised a dualistic paradigm: the birth of Jesus in a cave finds its prototype in the prophecy of Isaiah, and both of these act together as a good and true counterweight to the false and evil use of caves by the adherents of the Mithraic mysteries. Mithras was born from rock, and his initiates were "reborn" in secret ceremonies underground¹⁰.

There is good reason to suppose that Justin is using some sort of apocryphal story as a basis for his explanation, for Justin gives us three details which are not found in the Gospels: the stable was a cave, the cave was outside the village, and the magi were Arabs. Justin does not give his source, however, and one may also conjecture that it may have been oral. The cave itself

may have arisen as a motif in the story as a result of Justin's own assumptions. Justin was from Neapolis, born into a pagan family. He left Palestine while still a young man and went to Ephesus to study. It was probably there that he converted to Christianity, but he did not begin to propagate his faith until after 135, in Rome. Being a Palestinian, he would have found it only natural to assume that the stable of Luke 2:7 was a cave. The employment of caves as places where animals, usually sheep and goats, could feed and sleep was as much a custom in the Palestine of Justin's time as it is in Arab areas there today¹¹. It was as easy for him to think of a stable as a cave as it is for us to think of it as a barn. For Justin, it would have been an obvious assumption. The "tradition of a cave" may then simply have been Justin's identification based on his knowledge of Palestinian stables.

Justin gives no clue as to this cave's specific location. All he says is that the cave is somewhere outside the village of Bethlehem: ^{ἐν τῇ κώμῃ} ἐκείνῃ ποῦ καταλῦσαι, ἐν σπηλαίῳ τινὶ σύνεγγυς τῆς κώμης κατέλυσε. If we are to take Justin's knowledge of Judaeian topography as sound, this implies a place further away than the Tomb of Rachel which, according to Justin is "in Bethlehem" (Dial. lxxviii:19). Either he is not interested in the location, or he simply does not know, or he locates the cave further away from the town than the Tomb of Rachel.

Furthermore, it should be remembered that when

Justin wrote the Dialogue, it was twenty years after Hadrian had expelled the Jews from the region of Jerusalem and settled troops and pagans there, thereby breaking the continuity of traditions. The cave of Tammuz-Adonis had already been established as a cult centre. It is important to note that none of the Christian literary evidence predates the establishment of the cave and grove as a pagan site. As a Palestinian Gentile with a pagan background, living in Rome, Justin may have heard of the cult of Tammuz-Adonis in Bethlehem. There must remain a slim chance that Justin derived the notion of there being a cave in which Christ was born from news of the Hadrianic cult place. Certainly, there is no reason to believe that Justin ever visited Bethlehem, since his conversion to Christianity occurred after he left Palestine.

The fact that the magi are identified by Justin as Arabs will be discussed below.

In the third century, an apocryphal work was produced called the Protevangelium of James¹². It purported to be an account of Jesus' early life, but it shows an acute ignorance of Palestinian geography and Jewish customs. In fact, it clearly arose in a Gentile environment far from the Middle East¹³. Its reliability as an historical source for information about the actual location of Jesus' birth is, therefore, very limited. In Chapter xvii, a legendary description of the

circumstances of Jesus' birth is presented. Mary sees a vision of two peoples, one weeping and lamenting and the other rejoicing and exulting: the Jews and the Gentiles respectively (xvii:2). Then, before arriving at Bethlehem, Mary asks Joseph to take her down from the ass because the child wants to be born. Joseph replies, "Where shall I take you and hide your shame, for the place is desert?" Neither Bethlehem nor its immediate vicinity is, or was, desert. The Wilderness of Judaea lies a few kilometres to the east. The area around the cave of Tammuz-Adonis was a wood. The legend fails to correspond with both the general topography of Bethlehem or the specific topography of the area of the Tammuz-Adonis shrine. The writer clearly wishes to place the birth of Jesus in the desert somewhere outside the town for symbolic reasons. Joseph, in the story, finds a cave and brings Mary to it. He leaves her in the care of his sons while he goes off to seek a Hebrew midwife "in the region of Bethlehem" (xviii:1). It is clear from the text that Joseph and Mary have not yet reached this region. The story ends with meteorological events: a cloud overshadows the cave, vanishes, is replaced by light, and then a child appears (ix:1ff). It is plain that all the details of the story, including the cave, are mythical and symbolic. As Vincent and Abel put it:

Le Christ naissant dans une grotte obscure, c'est la lumière éclatant soudain dans les ténèbres du monde. Le Christ naissant dans une grotte isolée, sans secours humain, c'est la manifestation de la puissance divine et de la virginité de Marie.

L'univers suspend son cours, les créatures demeurent immobiles, et ce silence indique l'accomplissement d'un grand mystère. Toute cette mise en scène aurait pour but de caractériser le côté mystérieux de la naissance du Sauveur.¹⁴

It may have been an archaic form of this story that was known by Justin. He refers to the things "concerning the mystery of his birth" (Dial. xliii:3), and for the writer of the Protevangelium, these are also "mysteries" (Prot. Jac. xii:3). Alternatively, it is just possible that the Protevangelium utilised Justin's innovations. Unfamiliar with the Palestinian custom of using caves as stables, the writer has accounted for Jesus' birth in a cave by providing a story of Jesus' premature delivery. Whatever the case, the Protevangelium should not be used as evidence for the early Christian veneration of the grotto; it is legend. Even if it was to be used as an historical source, it could only tell us of a cave in the desert over three kilometres distant from Bethlehem.

The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, composed in about the eighth century¹⁵, used the Protevangelium and has substantially the same story. However, the writer tries to reconcile the legend with the Gospel accounts by having Mary go on to a stable on the third day after the birth (xiv) and to Bethlehem itself on the sixth day (xv). The Story of Joseph the Carpenter, written no earlier than the fourth century¹⁶, continues this tradition of Jesus' birth outside the village, and provides a specific location "beside the tomb of Rachel".

As was indicated above, the Tomb of Rachel is about a kilometre away from the Nativity Grotto. The writer is here referring to a site which became known as the Kathisma, "place of sitting". It was thought to be the place where Mary dismounted the ass to sit on a particular rock, and a monastery was built here between 451 and 458¹⁷. Early in the sixth century, Theodosius (Itin. xxviii) wrote that there was "a stone in a place three miles from the city of Jerusalem which my lady Mary blessed when she dismounted from the ass on her way to Bethlehem and sat down on it". This is the final, if modified, materialisation of the entire tradition that has Jesus born in a cave outside Bethlehem, a literary tradition which began with Justin. It should be added that the fourth and fifth century veneration of this particular site has no likely origins prior to the fourth century. The excavations at Ramat Rahel¹⁸ have shown that before the expulsion of the Jews by Hadrian, the area served as a cemetery, with a small village nearby. In the early part of the third century, the tiny Jewish community in Jerusalem appear to have buried their dead here. The Tenth Legion then exploited the graves as cisterns and built a bathhouse as well as a large residential building in the latter part of the third century. It would be strange if the birth of Christ or the dismounting of Mary were located by local Christians of the first to third centuries in a cemetery or a legionary bathhouse and camp.

The only solid piece of evidence for the existence of a specific cave in Bethlehem, identified as the place of Jesus' birth, is provided by Origen, writing c. 247:

If anyone wants further proof to convince him that Jesus was born in Bethlehem besides the prophecy of Micah and the story recorded in the gospels by Jesus' disciples, he may observe that, in agreement with the story in the gospel about his birth, the cave at Bethlehem is shown where he was wrapped in swaddling clothes. What is shown there is famous in these parts even among people alien to the faith, since it was in this cave that the Jesus who is worshipped and admired by Christians was born.

Contra Celsum 1:51¹⁹

This is Henry Chadwick's translation of the text. In using "the Jesus" he preserves the awkwardness of the last sentence in Greek: Καὶ τὸ δεικνύμενον τοῦτο διαβόητόν ἐστιν ἐν τοῖς τόποις καὶ παρὰ τοῖς τῆς πίστεως ἀλλοτρίοις, ὥς ἄρα ἐν τῷ σπηλαίῳ τούτῳ ὁ ὑπὸ Χριστιανῶν προσκυνούμενος καὶ θαυμαζόμενος γεγέννηται Ἰησοῦς. The Latin version keeps the final position of the proper name in the last clause: in illa spelunca natum esse eum, quem Christiani adorant et admirantur, Jesum. In Greek it is perfectly normal to have a definite article before a proper name, but the early Latin translation understood the letter "o" to be read as a relative pronoun, "o". If we read the Greek text in accordance with the Latin, the sentence would be better translated: "And this (cave) which is shown is noised around these parts by those who belong to another faith, since in this cave he who is worshipped and admired by

Christians, Jesus, was born". All that need be changed in the edition of the Greek text is a single diacritic mark to indicate that it is a relative pronoun and not the definite article. If this is what Origen wrote, and it seems very probable that he did, then Origen appears to preserve the actual words of the local population. They informed people that "he who is worshipped and admired by Christians" was born in the cave. "Jesus" would seem to be Origen's addition for the sake of clarity. Had he not meant to echo the words of the local inhabitants, he would have written "in this cave, our Lord Jesus was born" or something similar. "He who is worshipped and admired by Christians", on the other hand, is rather vague, especially when it comes from the mouths of polytheists with the syncretising mentality of the age. If we know from Jerome that the people of Bethlehem worshipped Tammuz-Adonis in the cave in Bethlehem, then it is such worship that must have been famous. Origen is clearly referring to this cave, but far from this being proof of the actual birthplace of Jesus, all his words really tell us is that the pagan people of Bethlehem believed that Jesus was born there. The probability is that the pagans arrived at this notion by an identification of Jesus with Adonis, not from any ancient tradition. Origen's failure to mention the pagan worship is quite understandable. He wished only to enhance his proof that Jesus was born in David's city, and had he added that the pagans of the area honoured Tammuz-Adonis

in the cave he would have given ammunition to his adversaries²⁰.

The pagans may well have taken some delight in convincing the occasional Christian visitor, undertaking an historia, that Christ was born in the sacred cave of Tammuz-Adonis. In the Syriac dialect, a cognate of that spoken in Palestine, the words אֲדֹנִי (Heb. אֲדֹנִי), "lord" and, more particularly, אֲדֹנֵי (Heb. אֲדֹנֵי)²¹, "my lord" were extremely similar to the Greek Ἄδωνις. The rites of mourning for Adonis were called Ἀδωνια. The Greek words all derive from the Phoenician root.

One might conjecture that Origen, living in Caesarea, heard news of what was happening. He does not confirm that he personally visited Bethlehem, but he may well have done so. He knew the Tomb of Rachel was on the road to Bethlehem (in Matt. xxxiv) and that the Tombs of the Patriarchs were at Hebron (De Princ. iv.3.4). He had seen the wells of Ascalon (Contra Celsum iv.4). Epiphanius mentions Origen preaching in Jerusalem (Pan. lxiv.2). He embarked on a tour of Palestine at some stage during his sojourn in Caesarea, as his comments in relation to Bethany and Bethabara concerning the site of John's baptism show:

We are persuaded, then, that we should not read "Bethany" but "Bethabara", having been at the places for an historia of the traces of Jesus, his disciples and the prophets.
in Joh. xxiv

Interestingly, Origen then discusses the question of

whether the swine, into which Jesus issued the devils from the exorcised man, plunged into the sea at Gadara (Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:26-40), Gerasa (Matt. 8:28-34) or Gergesa. These sites, of the baptism and the exorcism, are described by ^{an} anonymous person to Origen. He writes:

They say (λέγουσι) that Bethabara is pointed out on the banks of the Jordan; they relate (ιστοροῦσι) that there John baptised.

The third persons plural in this passage seem obscure; could they also have been pagans? In fact, they are more likely to have been Christian guides of some kind, but those who point out clearly appear to have been a different group. Bethabara, where the Roman road from Jericho to Livias forded the Jordan, was in Jewish tradition the place where the Hebrews made their entry into Palestine (cf. b.Ber. 54a; Origen, Hom. in Iesum fil. Nave. v.1. ~~Theodoret of Cyr., in Josh. 1.4).~~

Bethabara would then have been pointed out on the banks of the Jordan by Jews. The identification of this place with the baptism of John, however, must have been made by Christians. The Jews were not pointing out the site because of its Christian significance, but because of its importance in Jewish tradition; the Christians then made the identification that it was here that John baptised.

As regards Gergesa, Origen says:

But Gergesa, from which come "the Gergesenes", is an ancient town on the lake now called "Tiberias", beside which is a steep place next to the lake, from which, it is pointed out the swine were cast down by the demons.

There appears to have been a tendency in the third

century for certain persons to point out features of note to a Christian traveller. Eusebius confirms that someone was pointing out this cliff at the very beginning of the fourth century. In his Onomasticon (64.1) he writes that at Gergesa the place where the Lord healed the demoniac "is shown on the top of a mountain village very close to the lake of Tiberias". In this case it was probably the local Christians who made the identification. There were Christians in Gadara and Capitolias before the Council of Nicaea, as we saw above, and Batanaea had a Christian population. Guides could easily have brought their visitors to the spot. As shown above, the local population of Gergesa was pagan.

If there was a tendency for persons to point out geographical features and associate them with Biblical events deemed important by Christians in the third century, this does not necessarily mean that the guides made the right identifications. In the case of Bethabara it seems to have been the case that a site important to Jews, and pointed out by them, was given a Christian significance. The original Jewish significance of the site is not given by Origen in the place where he describes it as being where John baptised. Again, it seems that Christians tended to "forget" a site's previous associations if it suited their particular case.

It is significant that Origen knew the popular Protevangelium of James (cf. in Matt. x.17) and therefore

the story of the cave near Bethlehem. In fact, he temporarily ignores the fact that Gospels do not specifically mention a cave, but only a stable. This would demonstrate how influential the legend was at this time. It would perhaps have been natural for a Christian visitor from Jerusalem to ask the locals about a cave where "my lord", adoni, was born. Origen says this cave was "in Bethlehem", however, while the Protevangelium places it outside. It is important to note that for the first time in the Christian sources the cave appears within the town precincts.

Further evidence for the identification of the cave by the pagan local inhabitants as that of Tammuz-Adonis and the birth-place of Christ together is provided by Eusebius' Demonstratio Evangelica²², a source that is frequently ignored. As a Palestinian, Eusebius cannot have been wholly dependent on Origen for his knowledge of Bethlehem. He writes:

It is agreed by all that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, as even a cave is shown by the local inhabitants there to those who come from elsewhere for a look.

Dem. Evang. vii.2

Eusebius says that people hurry from the other side of the earth to see the famous place of his birth in Bethlehem (i.1). Those who come are probably Christians (cf. Dem. Evang. vi.18), but Eusebius never says it is only those who believe in Christ that go there, in marked contrast to what he says concerning those who congregate on the Mount of Olives, where the assembly is identified

specifically as faithful believers: τῶν εἰς Χριστὸν
πεπιστευκότων ἁπάντων πανταχόθεν γῆς συντρέχόντων).

More particularly, he never says that Christians in Bethlehem pointed out the cave: they are simply the local inhabitants.

To this day, the people who live at the place, the tradition having come down to them from their ancestors, bear witness to the (Gospel) account to those who come to Bethlehem, for the sake of an historia of the places, who believe the truth through the proof of the cave.

Dem. Evang. vii.2

Eusebius may preserve a certain scepticism about the site. In his Onomasticon he makes no reference at all to the cave as the birthplace of Christ (cf. Onom. 42.10-14; 82.10-14).

The literary evidence taken as a whole is not, unfortunately, extremely clear, but one may conclude that the early Christian literature interpreted thus far as providing positive evidence for the early veneration of a specific cave can be interpreted otherwise. Vincent and Abel believed that Justin knew of a real tradition of a cave and that the Protevangelium combined this true tradition with a symbolic one, while Origen preserved the kernel of truth²³. However, we have seen that all the Christian literature was written after the establishment of the cave of Tammuz-Adonis; that Justin may well have assumed the stable of the Gospels was a cave; or that some sort of story behind the Protevangelium lies behind his reference; that this latter legend does not bear any

relation to the actual topography of Bethlehem, but is symbolic in purpose; that Origen knew the local pagan population advertised a cave in Bethlehem where "he who was worshipped and adored by Christians", in fact Tammuz-Adonis, was born.

It has not been recognised thus far that it is Jewish tradition which locates the birth of the Messiah in a specific place in Bethlehem, not simply in the town in general. Midrash Lamentations Rabbah i.16 has a story, set in A.D.70, of an interchange between a Jew and an Arab. The Jew is ploughing his field when the Arab passes by and, magically understanding the lowing of the Jew's ox, the Arab tells him that the Temple has been destroyed. The ox lows again and the Arab says that the Messiah has been born "in Birath 'Arba in Bethlehem of Judah"²⁴; **בְּנִירַת עֲרֵבָא בְּדִבְיַת לַחַם יְהוּדָה**.

In this tale, the Arab (**עֲרֵבִי**) claims that the Messiah of the Jews was born in the fort or residence **בִּירָה** of **עֲרֵבָא**. It appears that a pun is intended. The meaning of the placename would then be "Arab fort". On the other hand, the word pointed as **עֲרֵבָא** is "willow", which could mean that the name of the place is "willow residence" or even "poplar residence", since in Mishnaic times the word was used for the poplar (b.Shab. 36a) and in Arabic it is the poplar that is called a'rb²⁵. Poplars grew with oaks and terebinths in Palestine (cf. Hosea 4:13) which, coincidentally, are three of the most likely

constituents of a sacred grove. The yew trees sacred to Aphrodite and Adonis are not native to the country. There may just be some connection here between the name of the tree and the appearance of the Arab. It is therefore interesting that in Justin's story, Arabs come to Jesus in the cave, while in Lamentations Rabbah, an Arab tells a Jew of the birth of the Messiah in בֵּית לֶחֶם. A further reference to a specific place in Bethlehem is found in the Palestinian Talmud (j.Ber. 5a) which, in a similar story, has the Messiah coming from "the residence of the king" in Bethlehem מִן בֵּית מֶלֶךָ דְּבֵית לֶחֶם יְהוּדָה.

Both these references date from the fourth century, but the traditions may predate their recording. It is quite possible that the Jews of Bethlehem believed that the Messiah was actually born in a specific locality there; born already because, according to legend, the Messiah has been taken away by the wind until the time comes for him to rebuild the Temple (Lam. Rab. 1:16). Had such a place associated with the Jewish Messiah existed there, then Hadrian would have been keen to annihilate it. Anything that sparked devotion to the idea of a Jewish Messiah was, in the Roman view, dangerous. (One might possibly, of course, say the same in regard to a Christian venerated site.)

However, the cave and grove of Tammuz-Adonis was more likely to have been the spontaneous innovation of new immigrants to Bethlehem after 135 (cf. Eusebius,

Hist. Eccles iv.6.4). Adonis was worshipped chiefly in Byblos, where annual feasts were held in his honour on the summit of Mount Lebanon, Aphaca, connected with a sacred cave and spring. As was stated above, Constantine destroyed the cult here as soon as he was able. The identity of the two gods Tammuz and Adonis is known from the euhemeristic Oration of Meliton the Philosopher (Pseudo-Meliton), dated to the third century²⁶, and other writings²³. Tammuz-Adonis was a vegetation god, both son and lover of Aphrodite²⁷. The mourning rites from the cycle of Adonis parallel those of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo (Zech. 12:11; 2 Kings 5:18). The worship of the god was well-established in Palestine. In the sixth century B.C., Ezekiel saw a vision of "women weeping for Tammuz" in the Temple of Jerusalem (Ezek. 8:14). In the Nabataean world, the divine pair of Aphrodite and Adonis was matched by Atargatis/Allat and Dushara, the power of the grape that dies and his reborn. Tammuz-Adonis was a very attractive figure. Not only was he the dashing young consort to Aphrodite, but he was the power of regeneration. This god inspired love and a feeling of trust that came close to salvation²⁸. Tammuz was also the shepherd who tends the flock, and in this aspect there was an emphasis on his death, with it corresponding mother's lament²⁹. It is in this form that he most clearly parallels Adonis, and it is interesting that Eusebius follows his mention of the cave in

Demonstratio Evangelica (vii.2) with a discussion of Jesus as "the Lord of the Flock". It is no wonder that many aspects of the cult of Adonis would soon find their way into Christian rituals and festivals³¹.

The enthusiasm of the pagan inhabitants of Bethlehem and the surrounding area, who may have told Christians that their god was born in the sacred cave, clearly backfired. Those whom everybody despised became rulers of the Empire. Constantine was no friend of Adonis, and the cave in Bethlehem was asking to be appropriated. The Empress Helena quickly accomplished the operation. She placed "rare memorials" there and beautified the cave with "all possible splendour", and the Emperor donated silver, gold and embroidered hangings (Eusebius, Vita Const. iii.46). The basilica of the Nativity was dedicated some ten years later on 31 May, 339 (cf. Itin. Burd. 598:5).

The cave complex (see Figure 7) has been subjected to numerous changes during its long history of use, and archaeology can provide little that would illuminate its original form and function. The main cave (1) now measures approximately 12.30 by 3.50 m. and is connected to other caves which were used in the fourth and fifth centuries as graves for the pious. In the east of the main cave is a site identified as being the exact spot where Jesus was born, now marked by a star (2). Entrance to the main cave is afforded by steps in the north and south (4) but the Constantinian entrance was in the

west. There was once an installation in the cave which, it seems, the pagans used to point out to the Christians as a manger (Origen, Contra Celsum i.51). The remnants of this can be seen on the east side of the annex which contains the venerated manger. Eusebius does not mention it, but Jerome says that the actual "manger" was made of clay (Nat. Hom., CCSL 78.524f) which was replaced by one of silver and gold. At the place where the manger is thought to have stood, there is now a rocky ledge covered with marble (3). This rock step continues in the remains to the east. In the centre of the "manger" is a depression about 1 m. wide and 30 cm. broad, which is open at the front². The projection on the east side of the cave was taken by Peter the Deacon (Lib. P1) to be the table at which the Virgin sat to have dinner with the Magi, which may mean that its present form is much reduced.

The northern part of the cave complex is entered by a medieval stairway and passage (5) and comprises "Jerome's Study" (6), the "Tomb of Jerome" (7), the "Tombs of Paula and Eustochium" (8), the "Tomb of Eusebius of Cremona" (9), the Chapel of the Holy Innocents (10) and the Chapel of St. Joseph (11).

In conclusion, there is no solid evidence for the early veneration of the Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem. Texts used to support a case for a Christian use of the cave prior to the fourth century fall into two

categories. In the first place there is the evidence of Justin Martyr, and apocryphal stories, which would place the birth of Christ somewhere outside Bethlehem in a cave. It has been shown that there are several possibilities that would explain why a cave should have been employed in this tradition, the most likely being that Justin assumed the stable was a cave and perhaps made use of an apocryphal nativity story of some kind. The Protevangelium then popularised this view by utilising the cave as a symbol, and Christians visiting Palestine came to presume that Christ's birth took place in a cave. There are, in the second place, the writings of Origen and Eusebius, which show that by the end of the third century, the famous cave where the mysteries of Adonis were celebrated was identified with the birthplace of Jesus; these do not continue the tradition of Justin, which locates the cave outside the town, but rather demonstrate a blending of pagan and Christian traditions. It is also been suggested that what predated the pagan use of the site may have been some sort of Jewish folk cult of the Messiah's birthplace, but this is purely hypothetical. There is no shred of evidence that might suggest that Jewish-Christians venerated the cave. Whether the historical Jesus was actually born in Bethlehem is a debatable point that will not be explored here. If his birthplace was Nazareth, and the Bethlehem traditions of the Gospels were secondary, then "the symbol of the cave", as Justin puts it, becomes a

legend embellishing a legend which, by good fortune and some engineering, found its resting place on a pagan cult site.

CHAPTER SIX

GOLGOTHA

At the very outset, it must be stated that throughout this discussion the term "Golgotha" refers to the entire area of the ancient quarry under the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre, not to the single rocky outcrop known as the Rock of Calvary. This usage is consistent with a conjectural Aramaic term for the site:

מקום - גלילתא (cf. Syriac ܡܕܢܚܐ) based on the translation given by Mark and Matthew of "the place called Golgotha" as "place of a skull" (Matt. 27:33; Mark 15:22); John and Luke both alter this slightly and drop any attempt to render the Aramaic place-name in Greek letters. John has "the place which is called 'of a skull'" (19:17-18) and Luke "the place which is called skull" (23:33). John records that "in the place where he was crucified" there was a garden (John 19:41), which implies an area larger than the narrow protrusion of the Rock of Calvary. Cyril of Jerusalem continuing this tradition, clearly refers to the entire area as Golgotha (Cat. i.1; iv.10, 14; v.11; x.19; xii.39; xiii.4, 22, 28, 39; xvi.4). The nun Egeria's use of the term is the same (cf. Itin. xxv.1); the basilica built by Constantine, known as the Martyrium, is "on Golgotha" (Itin. xxv.1-6, 8-10; xxvii.3; xxx.1; xxxvii.1; xli.1). This terminology was continued by Theodosius (De Situ vii), who refers to

Constantine's basilica as "Golgotha" but it rapidly fell out of use during the Byzantine period. How and why this happened is one of the issues that will be explored in this chapter.

There are in fact a great many issues that may be explored in regard to the site of Golgotha¹. The main question here will be whether there is any evidence of early Jewish-Christian veneration of the site. The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis holds that Jewish-Christians venerated the Rock of Calvary and the Tomb of Jesus, particularly the former, long before Hadrian built a temple to Venus-Astarte on the site. Purportedly, it was this tradition that was known to Macarius, who was then able to direct the Constantinian builders to the correct place in Jerusalem.

Bagatti believes that the reference to "a Hebrew who dwelt in the East" in Sozomen's account of the finding of the cross (Hist. Eccles. 11.1.4) is a masked allusion to a Jewish-Christian: "it is because at that time there was trouble between the two Christian currents, of Jewish and gentile stock, and they did not wish to give much importance to Jewish-Christians"². Sozomen himself, however, does not give credence to the idea that a Jew told Helena about the cross. Even more importantly, this legend of the Jew who knew the place where the cross would be found (later called Judas, who was renamed Cyriacus upon his conversion to Christianity) has its

literary origins far from Palestine, in Edessa, c. 400³. The story of Judas/Cyriacus became very popular in the West, but it has little relation to history. It simply conflates the Helena tradition about the discovery of the true cross with the story of the last Jewish bishop of Jerusalem, and even these two separate components of the legend are themselves unlikely to be historical⁴.

Bagatti thinks that the tombs to the west of the Edicule, the traditional Tomb of Jesus, may have been used by Christians of the first and second centuries⁵. There is no archaeological basis for this notion⁶. Just over ten years after Jesus' death, the area of Golgotha was incorporated into the city by Agrippa's wall, and the burial grounds can no longer have been used. The bodies would have been transferred elsewhere, outside the new boundaries of the city.

Perhaps the most important assertion made by Bagatti and Testa is that it was Jewish-Christians who believed that Adam's burial place lay under the Rock of Calvary. Indeed, if Jewish-Christians of the first century had venerated the place as the site of Jesus' crucifixion and the grave of Adam, then it would have a good claim to authenticity.

However, the first attestation of the belief in Adam's burial at the site of Jesus' crucifixion is not found in any writings that may be construed as being Jewish-Christian, but in Origen's Commentary on Matthew.

He writes:

Concerning the place of the skull, it came to me that Hebrews hand down (the tradition that) the body of Adam has been buried there; in order that "as in Adam all die" both Adam would be raised and "in Christ all will be made alive" (cf. 1 Cor. 15:22).

in Matt. 27:33

This form of the paragraph is found only in the Greek catena of Origen. In the Latin, there is a reference to "a tradition" but it is not specified that it is a Hebrew one; while the name "the place of a skull" is linked with the idea that the "head" of the human race died and rose again.

According to Bagatti, the Hebrews referred to by Origen are Jewish-Christians. Mancini puts the argument concisely: "these (Jews) ... must have been Christians also, for the synagogue held that Adam was buried at Hebron or Mount Moriah"⁷. It is plainly an illogical piece of reasoning that would conclude that any Jewish tradition which the rabbis did not record or support is Jewish-Christian. As we saw above, Mamre was not recorded or supported by the rabbis, but it was a place venerated by Jews for a very long time.

It would cause us some difficulties if we were to believe Origen, because if there was a Jewish tradition, preceding Christ's crucifixion, that Adam was buried under the Rock of Calvary, then the development of Paul's Adam Christology (Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:22, 45-49) might be said to have derived from speculation concerning

the place of Jesus' death. However, neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer even so much as hints that Adam lay buried beneath the rock. It is a profound silence.

Was Origen correct? His beliefs were certainly soon popular, and were reported by many other Church Fathers during subsequent centuries. Significantly, however, Eusebius does not mention this idea. Moreover, it appears that all the attestations to the belief ultimately derive from Origen. Pseudo-Athanasius' language clearly reflects his source: Christ suffered in the place of a skull "which the Hebrew teachers declare was Adam's tomb, for they say he was buried there after the curse" (De Passione et Cruce Domini). Like others, Pseudo-Athanasius found the belief apposite in view of the fact that Christ was renewing the old Adam. Epiphanius embellished the tradition by suggesting that the skull of Adam was actually excavated on the site (Pan. xlv.1-9). From the end of the fourth century onwards the tradition that Adam was buried under the Rock of Calvary is well attested². It is often found depicted pictorially in Byzantine and Medieval art, a subject which Bagatti himself has discussed³. The popularity of a tradition, however, in no way proves its authenticity. It is interesting that out of all the literary references to Adam's burial at Golgotha, only Pseudo-Athanasius, Basil of Seleucia (Oration xxxviii.3) and Ambrose (Exp.

of St. Luke's Gospel x) mention that it was a Hebrew tradition.

Bagatti relies heavily on apocryphal texts to argue for the Jewish-Christian, as opposed to "Hebrew", nature of the legend. Certain pertinent apocryphal writings are randomly deemed "Jewish-Christian" or as having their origins in a Jewish-Christian milieu, The Cave of Treasures¹⁰, for example. In its present form, this is a sixth century work¹¹. The Christian author used a Jewish text written in the fourth century near Edessa in Syriac, but while the work has then a Jewish source and a Christian redaction, this does not make it a Jewish-Christian text as such. Furthermore, even the most ancient material in the text derives from after the time when Christians in general had advertised the burial of Adam at Golgotha.

The text of The Cave of Treasures preserves a story in which Noah takes the corpse of Adam in the ark during the flood. The corpse is later replaced in "the cave of treasures" at the centre of the world, at "Golgotha". The first thing to note here is that Eutychius (ninth-tenth century) preserves much the same story in his Annales (i.918), which shows that the Cave of Treasures was employed in orthodox circles. The second point worth mentioning is that the Christians had a very different notion to the Jews of the "centre of the world". In the original Jewish story, used in the Cave of Treasures, Adam may well have been carried by

Noah to this omphalos, but the centre of the world was Mount Moriah, not Golgotha. Jews believed that Jerusalem was the centre of the earth, and the temple was the centre of Jerusalem (Ezek. 28:12 cf. Ps. 74:12; Tanh. B. Lev. 78; b.Sanh. 37a). In the writings of Cyril of Jerusalem (Cat. xiii:27-28) and Jerome (In Ezech. xi:5-6), however, the centre is Golgotha, which shows that the Christians had appropriated a Jewish idea but relocated it, as the Muslims would do later; in Islam, the centre of the world is at the Ka'aba in Mecca. At the end of the seventh century the Christian centre was marked in the middle of the courtyard which separated the circular construction around the Edicule, the Anastasis, from the Rock of Calvary¹².

The appropriation of the Jewish idea of the centre of the world and its removal from Mount Moriah to Golgotha appears therefore to have happened in the fourth century. It is extremely likely indeed that the Jewish source material in the Cave of Treasures would have placed Adam's burial on Mount Moriah. This placement is well-known in Jewish tradition, as Ginzberg has shown¹³.

Another apocryphal work, The Combat of Adam, which Bagatti uses also as a "Jewish-Christian" text¹⁴, is based on the final version of The Cave of Treasures and therefore dates from the sixth century at the earliest. Bagatti cites A. M. Denis' erroneous suggestion that The Combat of Adam comes from the second century¹⁵ and

then infers from this that The Cave of Treasures preceded it, thereby placing the latter text as early as the second century.

Despite its popularity, the tradition of Adam's burial at Golgotha was not uncontested in ancient sources. It was noted above that Eusebius passes it over. Jerome was initially taken by the notion (Ep. 46:17) and incidentally provides us with a rare insight into how this tradition was passed on: someone discoursing in a church on Ephesians 5:14 told the story of Adam's burial at Calvary, adding that Christ leaned over Adam's sepulchre and, paraphrasing the relevant verse, said, "Rise up, Adam, you that sleep, and arise from the dead" (in Eph. v.14). However, around A.D.398, Jerome vehemently dismissed the legend as fable (in Matt. xxvii.33). He repeated the reference to the person discoursing on Ephesians, but he went on to say that it was just a "popular interpretation" which was "pleasing to the ears" of people. Nevertheless, Golgotha did not gain its name because of Adam's skull, but because it was local jargon for "execution place", or "place of beheading". He explained that outside the gate of Jerusalem there were areas where criminals were executed, and these were each called "Golgotha", even in his day. Jesus was therefore killed in the "field of the condemned", as a criminal among criminals. Furthermore, said Jerome, implicitly arguing against Origen, the Jews did not have a tradition that Adam was buried at

Golgotha. Jerome knew of the tradition of Adam's burial at Hebron (cf. Lib. loc. 75:23¹⁷). Since Jerome was familiar with Jerusalem and its surroundings, his first-hand knowledge of the language of the local population provides weighty evidence for a proper understanding of the name "Golgotha". Even more significantly, perhaps, if there were other "skull-places" around Jerusalem, this would account for Cyril of Jerusalem's repeated specification of the Christian Golgotha in his lectures as being "pre-eminent" (ὁπρεπανέστως: Cat. xiii.39 cf. x:19)¹⁸.

If we know that Jews did not believe that Adam was buried under the temple of Venus, but under Mount Moriah or Hebron, how then did Origen come to make a mistake? . Origen may have confused a "temple" possibly referred to by his source¹⁹ with the temple of Venus-Astarte which has stood on the site of Golgotha since the days of Hadrian. Or else, it is possible his re-siting of an event located by some Jews on the Temple Mount was polemical: it made the Adam Christology of Paul more poignant. If the centre or navel of the world was consciously transferred from Mount Moriah, it was certainly not the only Jewish localisation to be thus removed. The sacrifice of Isaac also migrated from its original Jewish placement on Mount Moriah to Golgotha²⁰. Since Isaac was a type of the Passion (Diodorus of Tarsus, Frag. in Genesis xxii.2 cf. Gregory of Nyssa, De

Tridui Spatico, cf. Ps.-Augustine, Serm. Sup. vi

(lxxi):5²¹) the sacrifice of Isaac was moved to Golgotha. Here, in the sixth century, an altar of stone was shown where Abraham apparently offered his son²². The ring of Solomon, which supposedly helped build the first Temple (b.Gitt. 7.68a) was displayed at Golgotha in the fourth century (Egeria, Itin. xxxvii.3). Even the place where Jesus cast out the people buying and selling in the Temple precincts was considered to be the entry court at the Golgotha complex (Breviarius, A:3).

With the developing popularity of the tradition of Adam's burial at Golgotha, and the gradual heightening of the sanctity of place by means of these newly transferred localisations of Biblical events, there came a marked tendency to identify Golgotha not as the site as a whole but as the single rocky outcrop on the east side of the courtyard which stood between the round Anastasis structure and Constantine's basilica, the Martyrium. The identification of this rocky outcrop as being the exact place where Jesus died, however, appears to predate fourth-century developments.

In the first century, this rocky outcrop was an irregularly-shaped formation of unusable stone left over in the quarry. After Agrippa built the Third Wall (A.D. 41-44), the area was enclosed in the city, but there is almost nothing remaining in the way of archaeological data that would lead us to suppose that the vicinity was at all built upon. What is interesting

is that during the second century building operations which resulted in the erection of the temple of Venus-Astarte, the rocky outcrop was not knocked down. This in itself gives an important clue as to how the Rock of Calvary came to be significant in Christian tradition; if it was left, then it was left for a reason.

It is axiomatic that the outcrop of rock must have been visible during the second to fourth centuries to allow any identification of its importance to take place. It may well have been the only part of the original quarry that remained exposed after the area was covered by the temple of Venus, and therefore it acquired a special meaning for Jerusalem Christians, whose tradition located the death and burial of Jesus somewhere in this region.

The evidence for believing that an identification of the rock with the crucifixion place was made before the end of the second century is a particular reference by Melito of Sardis, who visited Aelia Capitolina in the latter part of the second century, after the construction of Hadrian's temple to Venus. Melito writes twice in his Paschal Homily (xciv) that Jesus was crucified ἐν μέσῳ Ἱερουσαλὴμ, which would indicate that he knew of the siting of the place within the Hadrianic walls, but the real clue to the place Melito knew as the site of Jesus' death is his testimony to Christ suffering ἐπὶ μέσῃ πλατείᾳ, "in the middle of a street". The word he uses,

πλατεῖα, is not the usual Greek word for "road", ὁδός. If Melito had used ὁδός then it could be argued that he derived the reference from mention of "passers-by" in the Gospel accounts (Matt. 29:39; Mark. 15:29), which implies that there was a road near the place of Jesus' crucifixion, but, as L. Robert has shown in his study of the word²⁴, πλατεῖα has a technical meaning: it particularly refers to a street in an avenue of colonnades²⁵. The word would be appropriate as a reference to the colonnaded streets of the forum, or to the main Cardo Maximus in Aelia. This is precisely Eusebius' use of πλατεῖα (Vita. Const. iii. 39), when he is referring to the entrance to Constantine's basilica off a colonnaded street, or more rightly off the Cardo Maximus.

The Bordeaux Pilgrim of A.D.333 was quite sure that Golgotha was the rock protrusion. Describing the scene he encountered walking toward Damascus Gate, along the Cardo, he wrote: "On your left is the hillock Golgotha where the Lord was crucified, and about a stone's throw from it is the vault where they laid his body and he rose again on the third day" (Itin. Burd. 593-4). We saw above, however, that Egeria and Cyril of Jerusalem refer to the entire site as Golgotha. Egeria refers to the rock only as "the Cross" (xxiv.7; xxv.9,11; xxvii.3,6; xxx.1,2; xxxi.4; xxxv.2; xxxvi.4,5; xxxvii.1,4,5,8; xxxix.2), the cross in question being the bejewelled crucifix Constantine had erected there²⁶. It would

appear then that there were two concurrent traditions in the fourth century: one with its origins in the Biblical accounts, seeing "Golgotha" as the name for the region, and the other which identified the rocky outcrop as the "Golgotha" where Jesus died. Later pilgrims tend to refer to the rock alone as "Golgotha" or "Calvary" (from the Latin: Calvarius locus)²⁷.

The possibility that the Rock of Calvary was visible throughout the Roman period means that one would have to reject theories about the antiquity of the tradition that Jesus' tomb was in this area which base themselves on an a priori assumption that the rock was covered over. For example, without the indicator of the rock, much greater stress must be placed on oral tradition. Charles Collasnon writes:

This ancient tradition, having become established, was transmitted, seemingly intact, down to Bishop Macarius, guaranteed by the continuity of the Christian community of Jerusalem and by the unbroken succession of Bishops, from the death of St. James the less, first bishop of Jerusalem ...²⁸

There is no guarantee that the Christian communities of Jerusalem had an unbroken succession of bishops; nevertheless, here of all place certain traditions may have survived. If they did, then they survived against enormous odds. The two Jewish civil wars and their aftermaths shattered the continuity of its citizenship in general. C. H. Turner believed that the break between ethnically Jewish and Gentile Christianity in Jerusalem was absolute²⁹. This seems too extreme a view,

especially as it is proposed in these pages that Jewish and Gentile Christianity, defined ethnically, blended into a multiform "catholic" Church before the most devastating destruction and population displacement wrought by Hadrian. All the same, a simple continuity of tradition in Jerusalem cannot be presumed. Collasnon, taking for granted that the important physical indicator of the rock was not visible, had to suppose that the site of the Tomb of Jesus was a tradition that has been passed down. He thought that terracing rose to the north of the forum like a sort of podium "under which Golgotha (the rock) likewise became buried"³⁰. There is no archaeological evidence for this supposition. The burial of the rock has been suggested to many others³¹, but Bagatti believes it was visible, and in this instance he may be quite correct. Not only do we have Melito's literary reference to a specific, and small, site in the middle of one of the streets of the colonnaded forum, we know that Eusebius never states that the rock was covered over and was ^{dis}recovered at the same time as the tomb, an omission first noted by Heisenberg³². The obvious reason why he did not mention the rock's discovery is that it was already visible.

Bagatti, basing himself on Katsimbini's observations³³, suggests that the rock was used as a little hexagonal temple of Venus and that Hadrian deliberately desecrated a Jewish-Christian holy

place)³⁴. In support of this he uses the evidence of coins which show Venus-Astarte in her temple in Aelia. Coins represent the goddess standing with her right foot raised on what L. Kadman described as "an uncertain object"³⁵, which seems remarkably like a rocky outcrop; an identification made eighty years ago by Wilson³⁶.

While it may be going too far to posit an hexagonal temple on the rock, Jerome states that there was a marble statue of Venus upon "the rock of the cross":

in loco resurrectionis simulacrum Iouis
in crucis rupe statua ex marmore Veneris
a gentibus colebatur.

This is also attested by Rufinus (Hist. Eccles. ix.6). The recipient of Jerome's letter, Paulinus of Nola, however, became a trifle confused, and wrote to Severus that Hadrian "consecrated an image of Jupiter on the site of the Passion" (Ep. xxxi Ad Severam 3). If Jerome is to be believed, and there seems no good reason to doubt him, then the top part of the rock may have been used as a podium for the statue of Venus. It must have projected above the level of the Hadrianic temenos, and probably abutted one of the streets of the forum.

Archaeology can here help to illuminate history and corroborate the numismatic and literary evidence to show that the rock was not necessarily covered over. Excavations on the eastern side of the rock were completed by the Technical Office of the Greek Orthodox

Patriarchate in Jerusalem, under the supervision of architect Katsimbini, from 1974 until 1977. Katsimbini published a short report with F. Díez in 1977³⁷. The area has also been discussed by Díez in a separate publication³⁸, by Bagatti³⁹ and by Corbo⁴⁰. Despite the continued absence of a comprehensive report on the excavations, it is possible to draw some firm conclusions about the history of the area by amalgamating these various summaries. For ease of reference, all the classifications in the following discussion will be those of Corbo (and see Fig. 8).

To begin with, we can be reasonably certain that the wall GH is Hadrianic, as Díez has suggested⁴⁰, and not Constantinian, as Corbo proposes⁴¹. The finely-finished stones and dry construction point to a date prior to Constantine. Moreover, GH is not, as Corbo assumes, entirely parallel to the Constantinian wall M. At its southern extremity, cut by Crusader wall K, it is over 2 metres distant from wall M, while 4 metres north GH is only 1.90 metres distant. Wall M must be Constantinian (pace Díez who thinks the bottom part is Hadrianic and the upper part from the eleventh century⁴²) because it forms the main south-western wall of the Constantinian basilica, and its upper part is constructed in the same manner as N and L and other Constantinian walls in the church. The lower part, underneath a pronounced shoulder, is made up of rougher stones up to a height of

4 metres above bedrock. While the construction of this part of the wall is not typically Constantinian, it adjoins the Constantinian walls N and L too neatly to have been constructed at any other time than the fourth century. The lower part of M is then simply a sub-structural wall constructed in a rough manner. It is possible that this lower part was built as much as a year earlier than the upper, and the adjoining walls L and N, because in area 208 the somewhat surprising find of an oven (a) with a small wall (b) attached to it came to light. This oven rests on fill which dates from after the first part of the third century, at least, because a coin of Elagabalus was discovered below it⁴³. This fill also contained a pagan libation altar⁴⁴, a figurine and other pagan artefacts, showing that the fill was laid after the destruction of the pagan cult. As Corbo has observed, the oven and its wall have been built in the space between GH and the lower part of M, utilising these two walls for support; the oven therefore post-dates both the fill and the walls⁴⁵. While it may seem surprising that the builders used this locality as a place for cooking food (burnt animal bones and ash were found within the oven), and probably even a camp, considering their possible belief that Jesus was crucified on the rock, the archaeological evidence permits no other interpretation. Rather than keeping a distance from the sacred place, it may well be that some builders found it a great comfort to sleep and eat as close to it as

possible, while they were able. The oven cannot date from Hadrianic times, as Díez believes⁴⁶; and it is not a sacrificial altar: it is just an ordinary cooking oven, a tabun. Corbo tries to imply that it was used for some kind of process used in the construction of the building, considering that another oven has been found in the vicinity which may have been used for melting bronze⁴⁷, but the animal remains in this oven point to a culinary use.

The flimsy foundation walls g and f in area 302, on the other hand, are built on fill at a slightly lower level than the oven and its adjacent supporting wall. In fact, the level of these walls appears to relate to the top of the stepped part of GH (see Figure 9). If we return now to look at GH more closely, it should be noted that it rests on fill, and not on rock like wall M. Therefore, the lowest part of the fill in this area must be Hadrianic. It is interesting that Corbo is insistent that in the areas 302 and 208 the fill is homogeneous⁴⁸ but, as he says himself in his response to the examinations by Díez⁴⁹, dating on the basis of fill can be hazardous: the Constantinian builders unearthed Hadrianic fills and then threw them back, intermixed with extra material, and the Crusaders of the eleventh century did the same, so that the fills of the church often lack any discernible stratigraphic levels. Therefore, it does not perhaps matter that area 302 appears to have been

excavated without any consideration of possible stratigraphic levels. Díez has managed to determine some layers of fill under the oven in area 208, but they must all derive from the early fourth century because nearly all of area 208 would have been dug away to form the foundation trench for Constantinian wall M. However, the Constantinian builders felt it prudent to leave the supporting wall (GH) for the rock intact, and therefore the fill directly underneath this was not disturbed. The lowest part of the fill in 208 may be a confused mix of Hadrianic and Constantinian debris, while the upper part was filled in during the course of building, with a break in the filling occurring at the level of the oven, when the area was used as a camp. This use of the area accounts for what Díez identifies as an earth floor related to the oven⁵⁰, probably a case of compacted earth resulting from frequent use. In Hadrianic times, the area was probably filled up to the level of the top of the stepped part of wall GH. It is significant that the upper part of GH is built so well of finely-cut ashlar; this implies that it was intended to have been seen, and not buried. The walls g and f in area 302 were therefore possibly shops or houses built close to the rock, perhaps even on the other side of a street which had a level at approximately that of the top of the inclining part of GH, 8.7 m. below the top of the rock of Calvary.

While these latter suggestions are, of course, conjecture, it is quite certain that none of the

archaeological evidence would contradict the notion that the upper part of the rock was visible in the Hadrianic period and the evidence confirms that it was a Hadrianic cult place.

As was seen in the case of Couâsnon, it is often assumed that since the Tomb of Christ was covered over in the construction of the Hadrianic temenos, then Golgotha must have been also. However, the rock ceiling of the Edicule is no longer in existence, ever since Caliph Hakim sent three men to destroy all trace of it, and succeeded in removing most of the rock⁵¹. The Edicule is given an assumed height by Vincent and Abel of 758 metres above sea level, while the top of the Rock of Calvary is given as 757.75⁵². They therefore manage to imply that the rock must have been covered over. However, the existing remains of the rocky ridge into which Christ's tomb was cut, as well as the general topography of the region, indicate that this ridge inclined down towards the south-east at an approximate gradient of a five metre drop over 30 metres⁵³. The levels recorded by Vincent along Christian Quarter Road range between 759.29 and 764.21, the lower measurement being 27 m. south of the higher, on a direct east-west line with the tomb, while the higher recorded level is 40 m. north-east of the Edicule. This would suggest that the maximum height of the rock escarpment above the tomb was about 6.6 m. below 764.21 (757.61). It should be noted here that Vincent's

measurement of the top of the Rock of Calvary is slightly wrong, and that its true height is 758.32 m. above sea level⁵⁴. This height has been possible to determine accurately only recently, when the decoration at the top of the rock has been removed.

Fortunately, we do not need to rely solely on topographical information to supply data relevant to the heights of the various features in the area. It is interesting that the Edicule, constructed after the tomb was cut away from the escarpment, appears to have been designed to give an impression of height. The roof of the Narbonne model of this structure rises at a 45° angle to an apex surmounted by a crucifix⁵⁵. However, the description by Adomnan⁵⁶, based on Arculf's observations, emphasises the interior of the tomb's small, cave-like qualities. One could, in the seventh century, just get nine men inside it, and a man of "fair height" had only 45 cm. between his head and the roof. Daniel the Abbot's description⁵⁷ of the tomb as being "very small" in height, with dimensions of only 4 x 4 cubits, is, despite being written after the destruction wrought by Hakim, significant. As Wilkinson has argued, the aim of all restorers of the Edicule has been to conserve as much as possible the original form of the interior⁵⁸. The paving of the temenos could have been at the level of 757 ± 0.50 m. above sea level, to amply cover the tomb, and still have been at a metre below the top of the Rock of Calvary.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the argument that the Rock of Calvary was covered over simply because the tomb was obscured by fill is invalid. Neither the original height of the rock escarpment into which the tomb was cut or the design of the Constantinian Edicule would lead us to suppose that the height of the top of the rock into which the tomb was cut was necessarily higher than the top of the Rock of Calvary, and therefore the latter need not ipso facto have been covered by the Hadrianic temenos.

Returning now to the Rock of Calvary itself and the question of its identity as a Jewish-Christian cult site, the next point to consider is the cave created in its eastern side (Photo 5). It is this artificial cave which Bagatti and Testa believe should be identified as the Tomb of Adam of the first century. According to their hypothesis, the cave predates all the legendary material that would have Adam buried here, and also inspired Hadrian to create a pagan shrine on this precise spot⁵⁹. The Jewish-Christians allegedly localised the "descent into hell" here. Jesus went through the cleft in the rock, caused by the earthquake of Matt. 27:51-52, and descended, spiritually, into the cave, the Tomb of Adam. This supposedly Jewish-Christian legend, based on speculations concerning the actual cleft in the rock (which was one of the reasons the outcrop was not used for quarrying) is not found in any Jewish-Christian

writings or writings about Jewish-Christians, but in orthodox writings such as Cyril's Catechetical Lectures (xiii.39; xiv.20), and the pilgrim accounts of Saewulf and Daniel the Abbot.

The cave is not mentioned in any texts before the seventh century. Bagatti's suggestion that it was used in pagan times for divination⁶⁰ is without foundation. There is no real evidence for the present cave existing before the seventh century, and there are quite good reasons to believe it did not.

To begin with, it is very strange that no early pilgrim mentions the cave if it was there, and it is perhaps even stranger that the legends that have Adam buried at "Golgotha" themselves fail to make mention of this remarkable feature. The first mention of a cave is in the sixth-century Cave of Treasures, which uses symbolic language to communicate theological themes, and, as stated above, derived its legend from a Jewish source which would appear to have had Adam buried on Mount Moriah. The source itself may have invented the motif of the cave.

The archaeological remains would suggest that a long and deep irregular indentation on the eastern side of the rock was covered by the Hadrianic wall GH to stabilise the outcrop and provide a facing (see Figure 9). The top of GH is not aligned with the existing artificial cave floor (752.92), but rather it has been broken through at a later period at a point about 70 cm. below it. It was

proposed above that the wall GH continued upwards for some metres. It probably formed part of the boundary of the temenos for the sacred buildings. Figure 9 shows the E-W section of the Rock of Calvary, with the relevant elevations. It is easy to see how unlikely it is that the Constantinian builders would have constructed the cave and its accompanying niche more than half a metre below the level of the floor of the courtyard and the Anastasis¹ (753.50±10), especially as the level of the Martyrium was above the level of the Anastasis by as much as 2.5 metres², and it would be odd if in this very narrow strip between the rock and the basilica the architects decided to lower the level and create a cave and a niche. In fact, we know that the Rock of Calvary was covered by a silver screen from Constantinian times until the Persian invasion under General Hruzia looted the building in A.D. 614³. It would seem that the Constantinian builders dismantled the top part of GH, but at a level of about 752 metres above sea level made the astonishing discovery that it actually supported the Rock of Calvary, which had an unfortunate deep cavity along its eastern side, rendering it almost hollow. At this stage they stopped dismantling the wall and re-used some of the stones to build a support over the newly-exposed upper edge of the cavity. The silver screen then masked all the imperfections of the rock, and the famous cross was set up upon its summit. Steps were built on the

northern side. After the Persian attack and their undoubted appropriation of the screen, the seventh-century builders of Modestus' time, who were the first to construct a proper church around the rock, discovered the Constantinian blocking of the upper part of the cavity. Familiar with recent speculations about Adam's tomb or cave, they felt confident that this was the place, and broke through part of the blocking wall. The Constantinian wall has clearly been broken through at some stage; it finishes to the left of the cave in too rough a manner for it to have been intentionally created in this way (see Photo 6). The seventh-century builders then made the same discovery as had those of the fourth century. Rather than blocking up the excavated area, however, they decided to create the cave. They made an artificial floor, and faced the back and sides with masonry. The small niche of the same height and at the same level was probably cut at this time also. The "Cave of Adam" was thus created, and Adomnan duly attests its existence:

There is a cave in this church (of Calvary), cut into the rock below the place of the Lord's cross, where there is an altar on which the sacrifice is offered for the souls of certain privileged men.

De Loc. Sanct. 1.5.1⁶⁴

The present cave is about 1.8 m. high and 1.5 m. wide, and could easily accommodate a small altar. The niche may have contained ritual objects or a statue. After this, the entire church around the rock appears to have

become known as "The Tomb of Adam" (so Epiphanius Mon., Itin. 1).

In conclusion, the cave was not in existence before the time of Constantine, let alone Hadrian, and cannot therefore have been used in Jewish-Christian theology or cult. Furthermore, the rock itself was utilised as part of a shrine by Hadrian, but there is no evidence that it was thought by Christians to have been the place of Christ's crucifixion before the end of the second century. The upper part of the rock, standing a metre above the level of the Hadrianic temenos, was used as a podium for a marble statue of Venus. Since it was the only part of the original quarry still visible, and was a striking part of the temple complex, the Christians of Jerusalem may have begun to point to it as the precise place of Jesus' crucifixion, possibly also because it was part of their polemic against paganism in Aelia Capitolina. They soon had no idea of how impossible a location it was for the crucifixion, as the lower part of this outcrop was underground. We now know that it is almost hollow and stood 12 metres above bedrock on the east, and 5 metres above bedrock to the west.

In order that the site could have become significant, it is necessary to credit the Christians in Jerusalem with some knowledge of the general area in which Jesus died and was buried. Had Jesus been crucified somewhere else, the Christians' decision to

create this rock as the place of his death seems less understandable, despite its role as the podium for a cult statue. There were many other pagan statues in Aelia, under which they may have felt it fitting to identify the desecrated spot of Jesus' death. In the reconstruction proposed here, the rock would have been a kind of pointer to the region in which was the tomb where Jesus had been laid. It is not remarkable that the community in Jerusalem might have preserved the memory of its location, even given the radical disruptions that affected Jerusalem deeply. It need also not be completely astounding that the Constantinian workmen found tombs in a place which was outside the city walls of Jesus' time, despite Eusebius' proclamation of the discovery as a miracle.

Therefore, this reconstruction would presume that the Jerusalem church, without venerating the tomb as such, was able to hand down the tradition that Jesus died and was buried "over there". It would have been pointed out to visitors. It just so happened that Hadrian chose this place, situated at a reasonable height in an area that was largely devoid of buildings, as a good place for a temple. The Christians then interpreted this coincidence as part of the Roman prejudice against them.

It may well have been this coincidence that led to the idea that Hadrian wished to annihilate Christian holy places in general, so that it was precisely for this reason that the Christians were inclined to accept that

the birthplace of Christ was in the Cave of Tammuz/Adonis in Bethlehem, a cult of whom had begun in the Hadrianic period. It does seem clear, however, that we do not have evidence for a Jewish-Christian veneration of the cave (which did not exist) in the Rock of Calvary, only the memory of the place of Jesus' death and burial preserved by Jerusalem Christians of a broadly orthodox faith.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES I: ELEONA

The final site of a Constantinian basilica is also held by the Bagatti-Testa school to have been a place of Jewish-Christian veneration prior to the fourth century. This is the site of the Eleona church on the Mount of Olives. Constantine, via Helena, constructed this edifice over a cave which, according to Bagatti, "had seen cult in former times, beginning with Apostolic days"¹.

It was argued above that it is very unlikely that the cave at Bethlehem or the area of Golgotha were subject to Jewish-Christian veneration as such, although the latter region was probably remembered by the Jerusalem church as being the vicinity of Christ's crucifixion. As with the location of Christ's birth in Bethlehem, so with the ascension; we need to assess the earliest date from which what was probably a non-historical event can be affixed to a certain place. In other words, it is certain that the crucifixion actually happened, and therefore it is not surprising that the community of Christians in Jerusalem passed on the memory of the placement of this critical event. However, the ascension as an historical event, as opposed to a spiritual one, raises problems. Matthew 28:16-20 has Jesus appearing on a hill (Tabor?) in Galilee to give final instructions to the apostles; the shorter recension

of Mark ends with the young man's instructions to the women to tell the disciples to go to Galilee, where they would see Jesus (16:5-7), while the longer recension has only: "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into Heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (16:19); John (21:1-23) tells of a final meeting between Jesus and the disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; Luke 24:50 contains a pericope which has Jesus parting from the disciples at Bethany, but not going up into Heaven. Only in the Acts of the Apostles does Jesus visibly ascend into the sky from the Mount of Olives (1:6-12).

The evidence given by Testa and Bagatti for Jewish-Christian veneration of the cave is entirely textual, since the area of the great church "on Eleona" (cf. Egeria, Itin. xxx.3; xxxi.1; xxxiii.1-2; xxxv.1-2)² was thoroughly excavated by Vincent in 1910³ and nothing found could be construed to be Jewish-Christian in character (see Figure 10:a). The partially rebuilt cave, which acquired its sizeable dimensions in the fourth century, is associated with the present Church of the Pater Noster and Carmelite Convent. The cave is no longer extant in its Byzantine form but has been used as a basis for the present cave chapel. The kokhim tomb on the west side was not part of the original cave, but was broken into at the time of the Constantinian expansion of the grotto, and then re-sealed (see Figure 10:B).

The principal piece of evidence given for an early veneration of the cave is the Gnostic Acts of John, written at the start of the third century. In this text, the beloved disciple John flees to a cave on the Mount of Olives during the course of the earthly Jesus' crucifixion. Here, the heavenly Jesus appears and illuminates the subterranean cavity with a spiritual light. He teaches John the meaning of salvation and is thereafter taken up (Acts of John xcvi. 4). The language is figurative. Jesus illuminates the dark grotto as the illuminating knowledge (gnōsis) he imparts to John banishes the darkness of ignorance.

As in the case of Bethlehem and Golgotha, there is not a simple relationship between texts and sites which would require us to presume that the identification of these sites preceded such stories. It is a tenet of this thesis that the inverse is much more probable: that from stories which describe certain events as taking place somewhere in general regions, later specific locations were identified in the land of Palestine. It would be methodologically unsound to use such citations in apocryphal literature as proof of a site already being venerated⁵. Popular religious literature of this kind played an active role in contributing to the identification and veneration of holy sites; it was not simply a passive record.

Places such as the Mount of Olives, Bethlehem and Jerusalem itself were well-known to Christians everywhere

by means of the Gospels, and were employed as settings in the multifarious apocryphal gospels and acts from the second and third centuries. It is on the Mount of Olives, in the History of Joseph (Proem, 1), that Jesus recounts the death of Joseph. It appears as a location in the Apocalypse of Paul⁶ and in the many versions of the Assumption of Mary⁷ as well as in the Greek version of the Apocalypse of the Virgin⁸ and the Discourse of Theodosius (iii)⁹.

The fact that in the Acts of John there is a combination of the highly symbolic motif of the cave and the locality of the Mount of Olives, which gained a special significance to Gnostics as the site of the ascension and last teaching by means of a conflation of Acts 1:6-12 and Matthew 28:16-20 (see below), should not lead us to suppose that an actual cave on the Mount of Olives was identified by Gnostics, let alone other Christians, as having particular importance. The tradition was the amalgamation of two common motifs. The topographical knowledge of the author of the Acts of John may have extended to the fact that the Mount of Olives is pot-holed with caves, but it is hard to imagine that the Gnostics, who read the Acts of John, could themselves have taken an interest in identifying a material cave where their esoteric tale took place. Rather, it appears more likely that during the course of the third century, in response to the story and others like it, the site was

identified by the local Christians and adopted for their needs. While an interaction between Gnostic stories and those of the orthodox Church at the end of the third century may seem surprising, that this particular tradition first arose in a Gnostic context seems to be plain from the existing literature. This may imply that there was a less clearly defined dividing line between the two wings of the Church, at least among the mass of ordinary believers, than the chief theologians of the day would wish to admit. Eusebius himself, who admits to knowing the Acts of John, claims that it is, like other spurious works, irreconcilable with true orthodoxy (Hist. Eccles. iii.25), and yet it is Eusebius who appears to connect the legend of the Acts of John with an actual cave.

In Demonstratio Evangelica (A.D. 314-18) Eusebius writes that:

"... those who believe in Christ from all over the world come and congregate (in Jerusalem), not as in the old days because of the splendour of Jerusalem, nor that they might assemble and worship in the old Temple at Jerusalem, but in order to learn together the interpretation (ἑρμηνεία), according to the prophets, of the capture and devastation of Jerusalem, and that they may worship at the Mount of Olives, opposite the city, where the glory of the Lord went when it left the former city. According to the common and canonical¹⁰ account, the feet of our Lord and Saviour, himself the Word of God, truly stood ... upon the Mount of Olives at the cave that is shown there. On the ridge of the Mount of Olives he prayed and handed on to his disciples the mysteries of the end, and after this he made his ascension into Heaven, as Luke teaches in the Acts of the Apostles ... "

Dem. Evang. vi.18

In the canonical Gospels Jesus does not pass on the "mysteries of the end" prior to his ascension; these are passed on earlier (Matt. 24:3-25:26). There is no mention of a cave on the ridge at the top of the Mount of Olives. Despite Eusebius' condemnation of Gnostic texts, there appears to be some conflation of the Gnostic and canonical Gospel tradition.

In fact, in Vita Constantini Eusebius writes not of the canonical Gospel as the source of the tradition, but of "a true account" (λόγος ἀληθής) which identified the cave with Jesus' secret teaching:

The Emperor's mother also raised up a stately edifice on the Mount of Olives, in memory of the journey into Heaven of the Saviour of all. She put up a sacred church, a temple, on the ridge beside the summit of the whole Mount. Indeed, a true report holds the Saviour to have instructed his disciples into secret mysteries in this very cave.

Vita Const. iii.43 (cf. iii.41)

While Eusebius is perhaps careful to avoid blatant Gnostic phrasing that would refer to "illumination" and "knowledge", the language of his accounts, and in particular ἐν αὐτῷ ἄνθρωπῳ τοὺς αὐτοῦ θιασώτα; μυεῖν τὰς ἀπορρήτους τελετὰς τὸν τῶν ὅλων Σωτῆρα, is very strongly reminiscent of the vocabulary of mystery cults.

The handing on of secret mysteries by the heavenly Christ upon the Mount of Olives was central to the teaching of many Gnostic groups. It is found not only in the above-mentioned Acts of John, but elsewhere in their

literature, for example in the Nag Hammadi library text of The Letter of Peter to Philip (cxxxiv.10ff), the Sophia Jesu Christi, where the location is a mountain called "the Mount of Olives" in Galilee¹¹; the Gospel of Bartholomew (iv.1-12)¹², the Pistis Sophia¹³ and in the Ethiopic text of the Apocalypse of Peter¹⁴. In a Manichaean fragment there is a reference to a conversation between Simon Peter and the Risen Christ¹⁵. The Risen Christ appeared, according to the Sethians, to a few of the disciples who were capable of understanding the great mysteries he would impart to them (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. i.30.13). The same idea occurs in The Apocryphon of James (ii.8ff) and the Apocryphon of John (i.30ff) from the Nag Hammadi library. For some, the Risen Christ was a continuing presence, but groups such as the Ophites believed the Risen Christ remained only eighteen months with the disciples (Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. i.30.14; cf. i.3.2), while in the Pistis Sophia, Christ remains twelve years. It was in some way to respond to these Gnostic speculations that the relatively orthodox apocryphal work Epistula Apostolorum was composed¹⁶, which purports to be a letter from Christ to the apostles.

Jerome would also employ the language of Gnosis in his comments on Matt. 24:3:

He sat on the Mount of Olives where the true light of knowledge was born, and the disciples who desired to know the mysteries and the revelation of the future came to him secretly. They asked three things: what time Jerusalem

would be destroyed, when the Christ would come,
and when would be the consummation of the age."

The sixth century Jerusalem monk Sophronius would be
even more liberal in his "Gnostic" phrasing:

Highly will I praise
the endless depth of the divine Wisdom,
by which he saved me,
swiftly will I pass thence to the place,

Where, to his venerable companions,
he taught the divine mysteries
shedding light into secret depths,
there, under that roof, may I be!

Anacreonticon 19:5-12¹⁷

It is interesting that despite the post-crucifixion language appropriate to instruction by the Risen Christ, Jerome has placed the time of this instruction before Christ's death, and clearly refers to Matt. 24:3ff. This re-orientation of chronology, perhaps to detach the traditions of the cave from their Gnostic roots, is found very early on in the Byzantine period. Despite Eusebius' testimony to the earlier tradition, innovations appear to have been encouraged soon after the erection of the Eleona Church. The Bordeaux Pilgrim of A.D. 333 refers to the cave as being the place where Jesus taught before his Passion (Itin. Burd. 595). Egeria says the same (xxx.3; xxxix.3; xliiii.6) as does Peter the Deacon (Lib. I), though he refers to the cave as a "bright (lucida) grotto", which probably echoes Egeria's terminology¹⁸ and recalls the original language of mysteries. Theodosius (De Situ 17) writes of the cave as the Matzi (οἱ μαθηταί:

"the disciples") where Jesus used to rest when he was preaching in Jerusalem, and yet the text of Theodosius contains an addition which has the beloved disciple lying on the Lord's breast at this place, which is perhaps a residual memory of the Acts of John. Adomnan's description shows that there was, in the seventh century, some debate about what instruction in particular was given in this cave, and when. He writes: "we must take care to ask what address this was, when it took place and to which particular disciples the Lord was speaking" (De Loc. Sanct. 1.25.2-3¹³). The Gnostic and the orthodox legends were, it would appear, in simultaneous circulation. Adomnan duly recommends consultation of the Scriptures, and concludes that the Lord spoke the address in reply to Peter, James, John and Andrew two days before Passover, that is, when he was still in his earthly incarnation. The passage from Scripture Adomnan cites, Matt. 24:1-26:2 (cf. Mark 13:3-37) is precisely that which the Bishop of Jerusalem read out to catechumens in the cave itself (Egeria, Itin. xxxiii.2). We know from this that the tendency to associate the instruction in the cave with a segment in the life of the earthly Jesus was probably encouraged by the leaders of the orthodox Jerusalem church via catechetical instruction.

Adomnan closes by noting that the church built by Constantine was still, in his day, held in reverence (cf. Ps?-Eucherius, Ep. Faust. 1.10), but in fact the church was destroyed by the Persians in 614 (Eutychius of

Alexandra, Annales 1.215) and not rebuilt. The lack of interest in reconstructing Constantine's great edifice on the Mount of Olives is testimony to the success of the orthodox programme to remove the taint of Gnosticism from the site, and yet it was counter-productive; what remained after the subtractions hardly seemed important. Having repositioned the time of instruction from after to before the crucifixion, they had to reposition the ascension. Already, it must have seemed strange to the orthodox to have the ascension take place in a cave, despite the supposedly long-standing tradition. The Bordeaux Pilgrim (Itin. Burd. 595) understood a little hill beyond Constantine's church to be the place where Jesus was transfigured (cf. Matt. 17:2), but a short time later, Egeria would attest the "Imbomon" (ἐν βωμῶν: "on the high place") to be the site of the ascension (Itin. xliii.5, cf. Jerome, Ep. cviii.12), and this identification was encouraged. It is not clear where Cyril locates the event, but he does not mention it being commemorated by the Constantinian basilica, or as taking place in a cave. The site of the ascension is given by Cyril as being, simply, the Mount of Olives (Cat. x.19, xiii.38). While Cyril refers to the locality as "the gate of the ascension" (Cat. xiv.23), one can in this trace only vague vestiges of Gnostic jargon. The round Imbomon or "Holy Ascension" church was constructed late in the fourth century by an imperial lady, Poemenia

(Palladius, Hist. Laus. 35)²⁰. Arculf's plans show the layout of the building²¹. The site of the present Mosque of the Ascension is located at the same spot, and preserves the "footprints" of Jesus on a large stone²². Archaeological investigations in 1959 were successful in determining the extent of the Byzantine structure²³.

Tradition altered. The supposed site of the earthly Jesus' teaching of his disciples became the place where Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer, and four centuries after Constantine's great basilica was destroyed the Crusaders built an oratory in the ruins to commemorate this event.

In conclusion, not only is the Bagatti-Testa school in error in randomly ascribing Gnostic beliefs to Jewish-Christians, they are wrong to assume on the basis of Gnostic stories that an actual cave was venerated from Apostolic times. If the cave had been important to orthodox Christians, for orthodox reasons, there would have been no reason for Eusebius and others to invent such a dangerously Gnostic history for the site, which later had to be expunged. Eusebius was anything but a Gnostic himself. He seems rather to be preserving a popular belief about the cave which, soon after, was radically changed to align traditions with "correct" theology.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CAVES

A discussion about a particular cave on the Mount of Olives glorified by Emperor Constantine leads on to consideration of the many caves which, according to the titles of one of Testa's articles upon the subject, are alleged to be "grotte dei misteri Giudeo-Cristiani"¹. The Bagatti-Testa school believe that Jewish-Christians utilised "mystic grottos" or "caves of light" in which they enacted sacred mysteries.

The widespread pagan employment of caves in Palestine and the Christian re-employment of one of the area's most famous grottos in Bethlehem have already been discussed. The previous chapter has shown how a legendary cave came to be identified with a particular place on the Mount of Olives towards the end of the third century. We have also seen how an artificial cave was created on the east side of the Rock of Calvary to correspond to pilgrim expectations engendered by apocryphal literature. One might suspect that the Christian employment of caves themselves had much to do with the expectations of pilgrims, rather than with a hypothetical group of Jewish-Christians. Indeed, there was a curious partiality to caves among Byzantine Christians. Not only was Jesus thought to have been born in one, but his mother, Mary, was purported to have dwelt

in a cave in Nazareth (Egeria, in Pet. Diac. Lib. T). Mary and Joseph lived in a cave in Bethlehem for two years after the birth of Christ (Daniel the Abbot, Zhitie 48)². John the Baptist was another troglodyte (Epiph. Mon. Hag. ix.17f; xi.19), though perhaps more explicably so considering the penchant of later ascetics to occupy caverns. Local Christians of today still believe Jesus spent his entire fast in a cave on Mount Quarantine, near Jericho (Belard of Ascoli, iv)³. Jesus was arrested in a cave (Egeria, in Pet. Diac., Lib. I, Eusebius, Onom. 74.16; Epiph. Mon., Hag. viii.10-14) where he ate a last meal with his disciples (Breviarius, A and B.7). We have already seen that his ascension was placed underground. Eusebius himself laid emphasis on the three "mystic caves" (one of which was actually a tomb) glorified by Constantine (Laus. Const. ix.17), but whether the idea of the "mystic caves" was Eusebius' own is by no means certain; it may have been Constantine's. Certainly, the preference for identifying caves as localities in the life of Jesus owes nothing to catholic theology and probably owes more to pagan modes of thought than to Gnostic legend; very rarely can the origins of holy caves be traced back to the symbolic stories of the Gnostics and to other apocryphal texts.

As was mentioned above, widespread pagan devotion to geological protruberances, caves, woods and springs appears to be reflected in the choice of sites shown to

the Bordeaux Pilgrim of 333. Christians who had recently converted from paganism, if not most Christians living in a pagan environment, would have found caves an appropriate place for prayer; though this is not to say that they envisaged Christ as another chthonic god. The continuation of the employment of the landscape's sacred places through into Muslim folklore demonstrates just how natural this phenomenon must have seemed. In Egeria's account, only the bishop is permitted to enter the holy caves. Indeed, the sacred cave replaced the pagan adyton as a zone of tremendous sacredness and fear. This same fear is reflected in Palestinian Muslim attitudes to certain caves: some of which are so feared that no Muslim would enter them, while others are entered only during the day, because their wahrah (condition of inspiring awe) is so strong⁴.

Paganism, in whatever form it took, appears to have made great use of caves. Dionysius was worshipped underground, as was, famously, Mithras. To recap what has already been stated above, when Eusebius writes that Constantine's soldiers went to "every gloomy cave, every hidden recess" (Vita Const. iii.57.4) he tells us much about the profusion and extent of these places as well as the comprehensive approach taken by Constantine's men. However, as Lane Fox writes, Eusebius was overstating the case:

Not even the entire army could have covered each cave of the Nymphs, the many caves which claimed Zeus's birthplace, the underground shrines of

Mithras, the caves of Cybele and Attis or the many cavernous entries to Hades.⁵

It was clear to the Christians of the early Byzantine period that it would be useful to employ caves to commemorate important moments in the life of Jesus and his associates. Some of these were already in pagan use. Certainly, it must have been crucial to the Christian authorities that the Christian holy caves superseded those that went before, in order to stamp out the vestiges of paganism in what would become a holy land. The appropriation of the cave in Bethlehem may have had much to do with the attempt to destroy worship of Tammuz-Adonis by encouraging the god's identification with Christ and then using this as the justification for annihilating the pagan shrine.

The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis uses Gnostic literature as freely as did Daniélou in order to determine "Jewish-Christian" theology. The use of caves, according to Testa, was polemical. The light of Christ had penetrated the dark grottos to illuminate humankind: "Le grotte mistiche dei Giudeo-Cristiani e delle Chiesa universale sono ... la risposta polemica contro le iniziazioni dei misteri pagani"⁶. Indeed, it is probable that later Christian employment of grottos had the pagans in mind, simply because they had pagans in mind throughout the course of their building programme; Jerome (Ep. xlvi.13.4) says that churches have been erected like "banners of the victories of the Lord". Isidore of

Pelusium (Ep. Lib. xxvii) finds it rather droll that a tomb has eclipsed the famous temples. It does not seem so convincing, however, that sectarian Jewish-Christians would have cared particularly what pagans thought about them.

Cyril of Jerusalem

The most important piece of literary evidence given by the Bagatti-Testa school comes from the Catechetical Lectures given by Cyril of Jerusalem in the middle of the fourth century⁷. In Cat. xviii.26 Cyril states:

If at some time you are staying in a city, do not just ask, "Where is the church (Κυριακόν)?", for indeed the sects of the ungodly endeavour to call their caves "churches", nor just, "Where is the assembly (ἐκκλησία)?" but, "Where is the catholic (καθολικὴ) assembly?"

Standing on its own, and taken literally, this passage could be understood as being evidence that certain people were liable to worship in caves which they referred to as "churches". This is the Bagatti-Testa interpretation. However, as a matter of good methodology, it is important to check the context of the passage under consideration. Cyril, in fact, makes it quite clear to whom he is referring.

Cyril points out that the Church is "catholic" because it is universal and comprehensive (xviii.23). It is an ἐκκλησία because it calls everyone out (cf. ἐκ-καλέω) and assembles them together (xviii.24). In

former times there was an ekklēsia of the Jews (cf. Ps. 68:26 LXX), but the Jews fell from favour and the Saviour built a second holy church of Gentiles; the church in Judaea was cast off and the churches of Christ abounded (xviii.25). Then Cyril turns his attention to others who are outside the compass of the catholic Church: the sectarians like "Marcionites, Manichaeans and the rest" (xviii.26). Avoiding the use of ἐκκλησία by using συσκήματα instead, he exorts the catechumens to flee from such polluted gatherings and to remain within the catholic Church. It is at this point that he asks them to take care when they journey to other cities that they ask specifically for the catholic church. Cyril refers to a kuriakon, "the Lord's house", by which he means a church building. The building in which Manichaeans, Marcionites and others met together may have been a house-church, or a more sophisticated structure: but certainly it was one which was not immediately distinguishable by the naïve newcomers to the faith as being any different to those in which they were accustomed to worship, or else Cyril would have pointed out its architectural peculiarities. When he uses the word σπήλαιον, "cave", it is likely that he is speaking metaphorically, in the same way that Jesus himself refers to the Temple as being turned into a "cave of robbers" (Matt. 21:13, Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46, from Jer. 7:11). Perhaps not altogether irrelevant is the fact that σπήλαιον was used euphemistically as a replacement for αἶδοῦα,

the female pudendum (cf. Hab. 2:15 LXX). Many translators of the passage in Cyril have accordingly translated "cave" here, as in the New Testament, with the English word "den", that can carry a similar derogatory metaphorical meaning².

Cyril is not necessarily telling us, then, that sectarians like the Marcionites, Manichaeans and others met in caves. The additional reference to ekklesia may also refer to Jews who, if using Greek, perhaps would still speak colloquially of an assembly at the synagogue as an ekklēsia (in the LXX it translates $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha$). Pagans would have spoken of assemblies as $\epsilon\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$. Cyril was not the first to point out the ambiguity of the term. Origen made a play on the double meaning of ekklesia as both "church" and "assembly" in Contra Celsum (iii.29-30):

He made the gospel of Jesus to be successful, and caused churches to exist in opposition to the assemblies of superstitious, licentious and unrighteous men. For such is the character of the crowds who everywhere constitute the assemblies of the cities. And the churches of God which have been taught by Christ, when compared with the assemblies of the people where they live, are "as lights in the world". Who would not admit that even the less satisfactory members of the Church and those who are far inferior when compared with the better members are far superior to the assemblies of the people?³

Cyril's words may inform us that in his day there was the same theological diversity among the Christians in Palestine as we met early in the century in the writings of Eusebius. Epiphanius would later confirm

that Marcionites were found in Palestine (Pan. xlii.1.1) at the end of the fourth century. Cyril speaks of these, and Manichaeans, as well as Jews and of other unspecified Christian sectarians, but not of Jewish-Christian sectarians. Even if the reference to caves is taken literally, which is extremely doubtful, then Cyril means to link the caves with Marcionites, Manichaeans and all other heretics in general, not specifically "Ebionites". It does not appear probable therefore that the origins of the Byzantine use of caves should be traced to any "Jewish-Christians" who stood in unbroken continuity with the apostles. The origins of several caves appear to have been pagan.

Ein Karim

It need not seem strange to us that Christian historians are often mute about certain appropriations of pagan sacred sites. Archaeological remains show us that a church building programme of great magnitude swept through Palestine during the Byzantine period and deeply altered its character, but details of this phenomenon are lacking in Christian literary sources. In his Vita Constantini, Eusebius mentions that the sites of Golgotha and Mamre were "defiled" by pagans, but he does not mention the very same "defilement" of Bethlehem in the cave where Christ was reputedly born. Perhaps it was considered unwise to blame the pagans at every

opportunity for defiling many later Christian holy places. Nevertheless, Christians appropriated pagan sites in the region with great impunity. We must also remember that once the accusation was established that pagans had used Christian holy places for their own foul deeds, then the way was clear to use any pagan site as a potential "defiled" Christian holy place, and this included their caves.

At Ein Karim, for example, a marble statue of the goddess Aphrodite was discovered in the area immediately west of the present Church of the St. John the Baptist, along with a large quantity of column shafts and other smaller fragments of statues (one probably depicting the leg of Adonis)¹⁰. These finds confirm that a temple for the worship of the goddess Aphrodite was located on the site during the Roman period. In this region there was a cave, which is located within the present church. It would be very surprising indeed if this cave had not been put to pagan use, lying as it did within a pagan sanctuary. In the fifth century a Byzantine church was constructed here which obliterated the former structures, and incorporated the cave into its architecture. The first Christian identification of the cave was that it was where Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, had her dwelling (so Theodosius, De Situ v). The church constructed over the cave was likewise in memory of Elizabeth, as the Jerusalem calendar records¹¹. However, during the course of time the initial identification was

modified, so that by the twelfth century, the cave was considered to be the birthplace of John the Baptist (Daniel the Abbot, Zhitie 59), an identification which remains to this day.

It should be noted that Bagatti believes that the grotto was venerated by Jewish-Christians, which in turn gave rise to a legend in the Protevangelium of James (xxii.3), which describes how, in order to avoid Herod's programme of infanticide, Elizabeth fled to the hill country (from Luke 1:39, 65) where a hill was split asunder to hide her. This is pushing the evidence to an astonishing degree. The area was contained within the precincts of a pagan sanctuary at the time Bagatti wishes the cave to be venerated by Jewish-Christians. More importantly, if it is stated that a hill swallowed up the refugees, then pilgrims would have sought to identify a hill, and not a cave. Canaan tells a similar story current in Palestinian folklore which justifies the veneration of a particular rock:

"It is said that while Mary was coming from Bethlehem to Jerusalem carrying her child, she passed Jews threshing beans on the rock east of Tantûr. Christ cried for some, and she asked the people to give her a handful. They refused and said they were not beans but only stones. And forthwith they turned into small stones. The workers at once followed her and accused her of being a witch. She hastened to escape and when she was on the point of falling into their hands she asked a rock to hide her. At once the stone opened and sheltered her. In vain did her pursuers search for her. This stone carries the name of srîr es-Saiydeh." ^{1.2}

Other Pagan Caves

A basilica of the first part of the fourth century was erected over the remains of a Hellenistic temple which had lain in ruins for several hundred years. A cave had been incorporated into this temple as a subterranean adyton, as is suggested by the alignment of the cistern with a wall north of it and with a wall beyond the external northern aisle, as Dauphin has pointed out¹³. The cave was used as a cistern in the Byzantine church, which seems more than pure coincidence. A cave that was once the most sacred part of a temple may still have been held in respect, and by employing it as a mere cistern in a Byzantine structure, the power of the cave could be vanquished.

In Jerusalem, the grotto between the two pools of Bethesda, mentioned above as a site for the worship of Serapis or Asklepius, was identified early in the Byzantine era as being the location for Solomon's expulsion of demons (Itin. Burd. 589)¹⁴. Prior to its pagan employment there was, according to the Gospel of John (5:1f) a structure with five porches, which is archaeologically indistinguishable from the pagan remains. A folk belief held that when the water rippled, indicating the presence of an angel or spirit, the first person to step into the pool would be healed from disease or infirmity (John 5:4). On account of this and the relationship between the site and a story about Jesus

healing a paralytic (John 5:1-9) a church was constructed directly over the cave between the two pools (cf. Cyril, Hom. in Par. 11). To ensure this location, the church had to be something of a feat of Byzantine engineering, with high arches built up from the bottom of each pool to support the structure on the northern and southern sides¹⁵.

Jewish Caves

However, we should not seek to find a pagan past behind every cave used by Byzantine Christians. A glance at B. Cohen's detailed index to Ginzberg's survey of Jewish legends¹⁶ demonstrates that Jews too found caves to be significant places in which to site important events in the lives of their religious figures. Besides the many references to the Cave of Machpelah, there is the cave where Moses and Elijah dwelt¹⁷, the cave where the Book of Raziel was hidden¹⁸, the cave, which disappeared, where Aaron died¹⁹, the cave leading to Luz²⁰. Certain caves were perceived as being hiding places for Biblical personages: for the Ninevites²¹, or for Saul²² and there is also a reference to a monster living in a cave²³. Whether Jews utilised local caves for any regional religious commemorations is not known, but it is likely that some of the actual caves of Palestine were identified as the location for legendary events, and had meaning for the area's Jewish communities. In the

Zohar, the cave has a symbolic significance as a symbol for life in this world, but there are implications that actual rituals, like "blessing the cup", actually took place in caves²⁴. The evidence Goodenough²⁵ cites for ceremonies in tombs may cover caves as well, given the ubiquitous use of caves as burial sites. Moreover, the Giv'at ha-Mivtar inscription specifically refers to a tomb as a "cave"²⁶.

There must remain doubt as to whether Christians appropriated caves which had significance in Jewish folklore, or whether they created sacredness ex nihilo in certain caves lying within Jewish areas of the land.

A large plastered cave (measuring 4.30 x 2.60 m. and 1.70 m high) was found on Mount Tabor. In the plaster are the remains of an indecipherable Christian inscription surrounded by chi-rho monograms, and the words: XAPH O ΓΡΑΨΑC. Bagatti suggests that this was a sepulchre, though there is no evidence for this²⁷. The cave may have started its Christian usage as a commemorative site for the Transfiguration (Matt. 17.1-8; Mark 9.2-10; Luke 9:28-36, cf. 2 Pet. 1:17-18), but this must remain speculation. The region of Galilee was a Jewish area prior to Christian developments there, and it is therefore unlikely that this particular cave was used by pagans.

John 11:38 states that the tomb of Lazarus was a cave (σπηλαίον) with a stone lying against it. Church builders of the fourth century would not have needed to

hunt long for a suitable grotto or tomb in the cavernous slopes around Bethany. It cannot now be determined whether the existing Tomb of Lazarus was ever a first century Jewish tomb, or simply a natural cave²⁸.

At et-Tabgha (ancient Heptapegon) a cave was found under the ruins of a fourth century church which most likely commemorated the meeting of the Risen Jesus and the apostles by the shore of the lake (cf John 21:4ff). This would explain the rock-cut steps and altar leading up from the waterside (cf. Pet. Diac., Lib. V3), now adjacent to the Church of the Primacy of St. Peter, which could be understood as the place where Jesus prepared bread and fish for the disciples²⁹. This tradition was later adapted so that the place became known as the site of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes found in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17))³⁰.

On a nearby mountain³¹ there was a cave identified as the place where Jesus spoke the Beatitudes (Egeria, in Pet. Diac., Lib. V4³²) which is perhaps the cave now known as Mghâret Aiyûb³³. Around the cave are basalt slabs belonging to an enclosure wall. Numerous Byzantine sherds were collected from the locality. Bagatti's identification of the rock-hewn cistern under the nearby fifth century monastery as the original cave of the Beatitudes seems unlikely. Even if a cave pre-dated the artificial cistern, which is by no means certain, the

builders showed a disrespect which would not be in keeping with the proposed sanctity of the grotto by using it as a cistern³⁴.

Other Caves

In most pagan areas we cannot know whether caves used by Byzantine Christians were ever religiously significant. They should, however, be noted.

The place where the angels told the shepherds the good news of the Messiah's birth was identified as a natural cave near the present village of Beit Sahour (cf. Pet. Diac. Lib. L1). This was made into an underground chapel in the fourth century³⁵.

At Kursi (Gergesa), a fourth century chapel, which abutted the rocky slope, was discovered in recent archaeological excavations. It appears to have commemorated a cave where the madman of Mark 5:1-20; Matt. 8:28-34; Luke 8:26-39 was thought to have lived³⁶.

While pagans of the second and third century used caves for religious purposes, and Christians adopted and adapted the idea, caves were employed for profane purposes as well: for stables, cisterns, shelters, store-rooms, or for other agricultural uses. In Eboda caves were part of the architecture of the residential district, which consisted of 350-400 residential units of caves and houses arranged in terraces along the western slope of the hill³⁷.

The Shephalah

Over 3000 caves have been discovered in the region of Beth Guvrin. While the main reason for digging these cavities was to mine chalk, some of the caves were used as tombs, cisterns and granaries³⁸. Use of the caves continued throughout the Roman and Byzantine periods, and sometimes into the early Arab period, as at Tel es-Safi³⁹ or into the Crusader period, as at Arak el-Kheil⁴⁰. Bagatti believes that the presence of crosses inscribed in the bell-chamber of Khirbet el-Ain (Figure 11), located opposite Tel Goded (Judeideh) indicates that Jewish-Christians used the cave⁴¹. Eleutheropolis (Beth Guvrin) was a town with a mixed population. Whether the Christians there used caves as hiding places during the persecutions, as did Bar Kochba's supporters in the Shephalah 180 years before⁴², is unknown. We do know, however, that Byzantine Christians used the caves intensively for many different reasons. A Byzantine cemetery existed at Horvat Midras, 2.5 km. north of Khirbet el-Ain⁴³. A church commemorating the father of John the Baptist, Zechariah, (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xxxii) existed at Azekah (Bethzachar on the Madaba mosaic map). Present day Tel Zakariya or Tel Azeqa lies 7 km north of Tel Goded. According to Sozomen, Eccles. Hist. ix.17.1 the body of Zechariah was discovered here in 415 A.D.⁴⁴. Macalister discovered numerous caves in this vicinity, one of which on the northern slope he believed

to have been used for Christian assembly (no. XXXVII)⁴⁵ since it had two latin crosses and other crosses on the side of a staircase⁴⁶ along with, curiously, a Kufic inscription. In the so-called "great Souterrain" Macalister discovered a cave⁴⁷ with "rude crosses and some lettering"; the latter which consisted of the abbreviations KC IC XC OTK(?) with the words NONON NOCH⁴⁸. Nóvov may be the accusative of the name Nóvos. This name is found throughout the Roman Empire during the Byzantine period⁴⁹. Νοῦν̄ is possibly the third person singular subjunctive of νοσέω, "to ail, be sick", so that the words might mean "let Nonos be sick". However, the inscription is very unclear, having been scratched on very soft chalk, and part of it may have disappeared over time.

At Khirbet Medawir, the hill opposite Tel Goded, there are several caves. In a pair of bell chambers Macalister found sherds of Roman-Byzantine pottery, one of which was scratched with a cross with bifid arms⁵⁰. At Tel Sandahanah (Mareshah) there is a chamber analogous to that of Khirbet el-Ain. Above the entrance is a cross in relief, and in the cave there are numerous crosses⁵¹. Elsewhere in this cave complex there is a graffito of a praying figure⁵² and a plain Greek cross⁵³. Praying figures were also found at Arak el-Ma at Beth Guvrin⁵⁴. At Beit Leyi a rock-cut Christian chapel came to light⁵⁵. The walls were inscribed with bifid-armed and crosslet-

armed crosses, and there was a partially defaced picture which probably depicted a Virgin and Child. No date has been proffered for the employment of this chapel. Warren and Conder⁵⁵ described inscriptions (one of which is in Syriac), and a "Byzantine cross" at Deir Dibrin in caves on rock and plaster. Ben Arie^h suggests that the crosses and inscriptions were cut in the course of excavations of the caves in the area⁵⁷. In June 1982 and November 1983, A. Kloner excavated a Byzantine (sixth century) cemetery consisting of 70 graves, east of the Roman town of Beth Guvrin⁵⁸.

At Khirbet el-Ain, therefore, the presence of crosses with typical Byzantine forms (bifid arms, for example) would better fit the later rather than an earlier period of Christian occupation. It falls into the general pattern of Byzantine remains in the region. Macalister believed that the crosses were inscribed to exorcise pagan gods from a pagan place of assembly in the bell-chamber⁵⁹ but his reasons for considering the vault pagan were rather nebulous: the chamber was large enough (12.19 m. diameter at the bottom and a depth of 10 m.) to hold a crowd; he could not understand the curious swastika and other curved sign; and he interpreted a recess and raised passage as being used for "the performance of some priestly fraud"⁶⁰. Furthermore, he seems to have been influenced by his knowledge that "we know from other countries Early Christians often attempted to consecrate a place defiled by the rites of

previous religions by affixing thereto the symbol of redemption"¹. It may be better to consider the crosses on the walls of the bell-chamber to be the result of enthusiastic Christian quarriers. They are, after all, positioned 9 metres above the floor of the cavern, and must have been carved in the soft chalk during the course of quarrying. The two curvilinear graffiti would have been carved into the wall at the time the chamber was converted into a columbarium, during the early Arab period; the dating for which is provided by the fact that the crosses were cut into when the loculi were created. The spiral design shows some similarity with that of the "two snakes" shown by Canaan².

Bethphage: A Tomb

The final employment of caves to be considered here is less well-known. The identification of a cave at Bethesda as a place where Solomon worked beneficent magic reflects an understanding that magicians went to caves and, especially, tombs to work their spells. For example, Epiphanius (Pan. xxix.7.1-8) tells a story of how the young patriarch "Hillel" becomes enamoured of a Christian girl he sees in the hot baths at Emmatha. His aides decide to equip him with magical power to help his cause, and after sunset they take the lad "to the tombs; it is thus in my country one calls artificial caves, full of bodies"³, which are hewn out of rock" (Pan.

xxix.8.2)⁴. The aides recite various incantations and spells and do impious acts, but Josephus discovers what is taking place and hastens, with another elder, to where the group were making magic among the funerary monuments. After the group has gone, Josephus defiles the magical apparatus, which has, curiously, been left on the ground (8.6). This act, and the fact that the girl is a Christian and therefore, by implication, immune to magic, ensures that the young patriarch is frustrated in his aims.

If, therefore, one finds mysterious signs on the walls of a tomb from the Roman period one might be advised to consider a magical interpretation. It would appear very possible, in fact, that some of the cryptic scratchings on the wall of a tomb (no.21) in the area of Bethphage, on the Mount of Olives, are magical signs of some kind, not, as the Franciscan excavators assume, "Jewish-Christian" symbols indicating a millenarian theology⁵.

Before proceeding to attempt identification of the graffiti found within this tomb, it is important to fix the tomb within its archaeological context. It is carved out of the hillside as part of a sequence of tombs (nos 19, 20, 21, 22) placed side by side⁶, so that one would expect them to have been constructed at more or less the same time. Tombs 19, 21 and 22 are all arcosolia type tombs, and tomb 20 was begun but never finished. Tomb 19

was sealed with a flat, rectangular blocking stone⁶⁷ and Tomb 21 with a round blocking stone. The same type of arcosolia tomb (no. 3) is found 130 m. away near the present church. Another arcosolia tomb (no. 26) differs substantially from the rest in its lay-out and is entered from above rather than from the side. It shares similar features to the three Byzantine shaft graves⁶⁸. Tomb 26 is also datable to the Byzantine era by crosses within circles carved into the wall and characteristic Byzantine sherds⁶⁹. Apart from Tomb 21, none of the homogeneous arcosolia tombs have any markings. There were no datable artefacts found within any of these tombs.

The key to the date of Tomb 21 may be the employment of a round blocking stone. Saller believed this dated the tomb to the "last Jewish period"⁷⁰ but Amos Kloner has shown that during the early Roman period round blocking stones were used only for the entrances of large, monumental tombs with multiple chambers, and not in general for small tombs like this. He found only three examples of small tombs with round blocking stones from the early Roman period⁷¹. The round blocking stones were employed more frequently in the late Roman and Byzantine periods (the rolling stone of the "Garden Tomb" is a good Byzantine example). However, Tomb 19 has a typical rectangular stone which was commonly used for blocking the entrances of small tombs in the early Roman period⁷². A suggestion might be that the arcosolia tombs of Bethphage were cut during the late Roman to early

Byzantine period.

If we now look at the graffiti inside Tomb 21 (see Figure 13), it should be noted at the outset that Testa is really discussing Gnostic speculations based on number and letter symbolism (cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. i.15-16). There is no real evidence that Jewish-Christians indulged in such speculations.

The letters ϕ χ θ τ κ π (no. 15) on one line do not form a word, but may be the initial letters of a formula, if we read the second letter as a strangely slanted upsilon. However, they may well be musical notation. The peculiar slant of the upsilon is found in the vocal notation, as given by Curt Sachs⁷³, where it represents the bass note D, while a regular upsilon (χ) is E# or G#. All the characters fall very neatly into the repertoire of the vocalic bass notation as listed by Sachs, which put into modern notation would be:



The symmetry of this sequence seems unlikely to be the result of pure chance.

As a native of Palestine, Julius Africanus shows how important music was in magical rituals in his records concerning the craft⁷⁴. Notation for different modes was based on the Greek alphabet, though the characters were often cut in half, upturned or otherwise modified. For example, "the signs of the proslambanomēne (lowest notes)

of the Lydian mode" were "zeta defective and tau reclining": 7 and † respectively⁷⁵. Perhaps because the harmonic system of instrumental Graeco-Roman music was extremely complex, it is less easy to determine that the signs of the line under the vocalic notation, which read: N I' Σ H Ν, are creditably musical. However, a good reason for seeing them as such is provided by the small mark ^, after the iota, which in the ancient musical notation indicates a treble note⁷⁶. The final letter could be a zeta "reclining" or else a very small nun.

Preceding these letters is a roughly scratched depiction of a harp (Figure 13:15c), which may be an indication that we are to read the characters as musical notation.

To the right of the harp are two symbols: one of which is like a number eight (Figure 13:15a). This is found on its side in Latin inscriptions as an abbreviation for 1000⁷⁷, but its closest parallel is a magical sign⁷⁸.

The other symbol is a palm branch (Figure 13:15b, cf.5), which is a sign found in pagan and Jewish contexts⁷⁹ as well as in many Christian inscriptions⁸⁰ and in Muslim shrines⁸¹. Universally, it is the symbol of life and victory.

Numerous light scratchings on the wall of the tomb, some of which are cross marks (Figure 13:1-3, 6, 7, 9-11, 13, 14), would fit in well with a magical interpretation, since crosses of various kinds are found in the papyri⁸².

The specific motif of the cross mark inside a rectangle (Figure 13:2) is found on three occasions³³, while the figure-eight sign (Figure 13:15a) appears once³⁴. The large capital letters standing on their own, (Figure 13:8) and, probably, T (Figure 13:16³⁵), likewise appear in the papyri³⁶, but it is not certain in either case whether these are intentional markings, or markings that simply appear like letters. The same can be said for some of the crosses. It is interesting that the cross markings appear only over one trough (Figure 12:a) and to the left of the entrance, as if they are identifying the way to one corpse only. Unlike Christian crosses, these "crosses" are not purposefully drawn, and may be indicators rather than symbols, to draw the visitor's attention to a particular corpse. The mark on the outside of the tomb, which is a very roughly drawn X (Figure 13:1), would be a sign to the visitor that this is the special tomb. Why it should be special cannot now be known.

Certainly the most interesting graffiti are four letters (Figure 13:12) scratched right of the rest and angled in such a manner that would suggest the writer was in some way leaning over from the standing area to make these markings. These are written in paleo-Hebrew or Samaritan script. A comparison between the coin alphabet of the First and Second Revolts and the Samaritan alphabet used on the third-fourth century bilingual

Testa read the four letters as:

The first letter is clearly a nun, but Testa's identification of the second as a waw is quite wrong.

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by the difficulty of scratching the inscription at an angle. Another possibility is that it is an inverted sade, written in the coinage as 3.

The first three letters should probably be read: נער or נטר. Testa may be correct to consider the inscription a name (or title) followed by the letter šin, which should be read as an abbreviated form of שלום, as in Jewish inscriptions (Frey, CIJ, nos. 904, 1090, 1392). If the reading is ש נער, then it could be "a youth, peace" (cf. Frey, CIJ, no. 668). If the reading is ש נטר, we may have: "a guardian, peace". The former option is interesting, because נער was a title of the great angel or "lesser Yao", Metatron, in the Hekhalot texts. In 3 Enoch 3:2 Na'ar is the predicate by which Metatron is called by God³⁰.

Whatever the meaning of these graffiti might be, it seems unlikely that we should accept that these are the scratchings of a millenarian Jewish-Christian or Gnostic sect. Rather, this may be evidence of a Jewish or Samaritan group who wrote in a deliberate paleo-Hebrew or Samaritan script for their own reasons. Since Jews were not permitted in the environs of Jerusalem from the middle of the second century, it is possible that the secretive quality of this graffiti derives from a necessity to be clandestine. There is, however, nothing that would stop this tomb being assigned to the early Byzantine period, when the ban on Jews was more laxly enforced. Whatever the case, the tomb was considered

significant by certain persons, as shown by the indicator markings around the entrance and over the significant trough. It is very possible that the meaning of the graffiti is magical or mystical, but its character is more likely to be Jewish or even Samaritan, not Christian.

To conclude, caves of various types were used in Palestine by Byzantine Christians. Some of these were given utilitarian uses, and others were employed as holy places. Some of the caves had been significant in pagan, Jewish and Samaritan tradition, and were provided with a Christian tradition that would supersede the former. Some of the caves had not been religiously significant before the Christians made use of them. At least one "cave", the Bethphage tomb, that has been assigned to Jewish-Christians by the Bagatti-Testa school, is unlikely to have any connection with Christianity in any form. Nothing would suggest that Jewish-Christians in general made special use of caves.

CHAPTER NINE

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES II: THE BETHANY CAVE AND GETHSEMANE

The Bethany Cave

On March 28, 1950 a cave was discovered in the property of the Sisters of Charity, Bethany. It measures 5.40 x 4.00 m. and on the walls are graffiti as well as a painting and inscription done in red paint (see Figures 14 and 15). The Franciscans were the first to publish news of the find in their popular journal La Terra Santa¹, where the view was expressed that the graffiti on the walls of the cave showed that it was frequented and venerated at various periods. The article goes on to report that the monograms from the time of Constantine and other graffiti give the feeling of a Christian atmosphere; the inscriptions and a study of the ceramics found on the site indicate a date in the Byzantine era²; and the locality indicates that some memory lived on here at Bethany, possibly of the Lord's Supper.

The Dominican Fathers of the École Biblique et Archéologique Française were invited by the Sisters to study the cave. P. Benoit and M. E. Boismard subsequently published a corpus of the graffiti and a detailed analysis of the site³. They successfully deciphered most of the scratchings and concurred with the anonymous writer of the article in La Terra Santa that this was a

Christian holy place. In their opinion, the abundance of graffiti and emblems indicated that it was visited by pilgrims over a long period⁴, probably between the fourth and seventh centuries. It was not identified by Benoit and Boismard with any site mentioned in the written sources.

Bagatti mentioned the cave in an article two years later, and suggested that the cave was one of three places where "last suppers" were held by early Christians⁵. His sole source for this supposition is the sixth century (Ps-?) Eutychius of Constantinople (Serm. Pasch. iii, PG 86, 2392) who wrote that Christ held three suppers with his disciples before his death: one at Gethsemane, one at Bethany and one on Mount Zion.

S. Saller noted the existence of the cave in his study of Bethany⁶; however, apart from this, the cave was virtually forgotten until Testa developed Bagatti's ideas in his article on "mystic grottos"⁷. In the absence of any clear identification of the site, he presented the argument that here a Jewish-Christian "supper" rite was enacted:

I fedeli (Giudeo-Cristiani) che venivano a cenare nella Grotta, si preparavano a ricevere i doni dello Spirito promesso dal Cristo asceso al cielo.⁸

Testa believes that the grotto was used for Christian worship before the Byzantine period. A date in the Roman period was proposed on the basis of archaeological remains, which Testa believed postdated the cave's employment for Jewish-Christian worship. As Mancini

writes:

An examination of the material which filled the grotto yielded two coins, some fragments of glass and pieces of pottery. Unfortunately, these were overlooked in the study done by the Dominicans. They all seem to belong to the Byzantine period. This leads us to believe that, at that time, the grotto was no longer used for worship. This coincides well with what we know about the end of the Judaeo-Christians.⁹

This is extraordinary reasoning. As a rule, coins and identifiable pottery fragments are used by archaeologists to date the human use of a site to the period of these items. No objects prior to the fourth century were found in the cave. Moreover, Byzantine coins, pieces of glass and pottery sherds are precisely what we would expect to find in a place venerated by Christian pilgrims. The pieces of glass would originate from receptacles used to carry holy oil home from sacred sites¹⁰. The pottery derived from lamps and small bowls containing offerings (cf. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. ii).

Using Bagatti's suggestion of the early Christian "last suppers", Testa takes up the motif of the messianic banquet (cf. Prov. 9:5; Isaiah 25:6; 55:1-3 cf. Luke 14:16-21) to argue that mystical suppers were taking place in Judaism. The suppers of the Essenes (cf. 1QS vi; 1QSa ii) and Therapeutae, as reported by Philo (Vita. Cont. v-xi), may appear to be of this nature. According to Testa, however, Jewish-Christians continued this tradition. He uses Daniélou's observation¹¹ that Melchisedek's offering of bread and wine was considered

from a very early date to be a figure of the Eucharist, to argue that it was Jewish-Christians who believed this, when in fact it was widely known throughout the early Church (cf. Clement of Alexandria, Strom. iv.25; Cyprian, Ep. lxiii.4; Ambrose, De Sacr. v.1). According to Testa, Eutychius is polemicising against the Jewish-Christians, especially Ebionites, who spoke of three suppers of the Lord: one at Gethsemane, one at Bethany and one at Sion¹². The text of Eutychius provides no such corroborative evidence. He is simply reporting a sixth-century belief that Christ ate three suppers in these three separate places. The belief is at no time attached to "Ebionites".

The onomasticon of the graffiti argues strongly for the site being a pilgrimage centre rather than a sacred grotto for Jewish-Christian mysteries. Testa attempted to use the presence of a few Semitic-sounding names, Abidella (no.13), Makai (no.6), Anamos (no.43), Barab (no.32) and an unreadable inscription in Syriac (no.70) to argue for the presence of Semites, viz. Jewish-Christians. It is an error to assume that any Christian with a Semitic-sounding name was a Jewish-Christian. The northern church at Herodion, dating from the sixth century, has three inscriptions from a family with largely Semitic names¹³, but there is no evidence that they were Jewish-Christian. The Semitic names in the Bethany cave, along with the Syriac dipinto, demonstrate that pilgrims from Syria and local regions

came to the cave as well as those from further afield. The majority of names are Greek and can be found throughout the Mediterranean world during the Byzantine period. The language of the graffiti is also Greek apart from the one Syriac inscription and a cryptogram (no.50), the language of which may be Syriac or Arabic¹⁴.

Testa's most intriguing argument for the cave's Jewish-Christian employment rested on his interpretation of the paintings done in red¹⁵. These form the central focus of the cave's decoration and depict four cross motifs around a large central object (see Figure 15). A very faded inscription is painted across the breadth of the field of decoration. The crosses are arranged two on each side of the central object, and one above the other. The lower pair are identical 45 cm. high Latin crosses with alpha and omega on either side, and traces of circles around them; the upper pair are both within circles: the one on the left being a chi-rho cross monogram with alpha and omega under the horizontal bar, and the one on the right having equal arms which thicken as they meet the circumference of the circle. As one can see from the layers of plaster, the red drawings belong to the latest period of the cave's employment. The earliest graffiti are incised into a primary coat of plaster composed of lime and ash. Then, at some stage, the walls were coated again with limewash and the red decoration was painted.

The use of red pigment to decorate the plastered walls of tombs and holy places is found at a number of sites in Palestine. The Garden Tomb in Jerusalem has two large red crosses, on the north and east walls respectively, which also have the abbreviations of Jesus Christ, IC XC, and the Greek letters alpha and omega. These four components, IC, XC, A, Ω occupy each of the four spaces created by the arms of the cross, clockwise from the top left. The date of these crosses is fifth to sixth century¹⁶. At Ein Yalu an almost identical cross painted in red, 30 cm. high, was found on one of the walls of a Roman bath-house, which was employed during the Byzantine period¹⁷. Numerous dipinti in red paint were found in tombs in the Wādi er-Rababi (Valley of Hinnom) in Jerusalem¹⁸. A Byzantine tomb in Beth Guvrin discovered early this century has roosters, peacocks, flowers, a grapevine, and crosses 14-17 cm high all painted in red¹⁹. A cave in Wadi Suwenit, belonging to the Laura of Firminus, has red crosses with Greek and Syriac inscriptions also in red²⁰. Sixteen red crosses with Greek letters were found on the walls of the fifth-century burial cave at Horvat Midras, in the Shephalah²¹. In all cases the red-painted decorations are middle to late Byzantine, no earlier than the fifth century. Cross motifs themselves are probably all Byzantine in Palestine; V. Tzaferis has argued that crosses are not found in Palestine prior to the fourth century²².

Testa understood the central object depicted in the

red decoration to be a throne, which he proceeded to interpret as a pre-Byzantine Jewish-Christian motif. The "empty throne" motif is, however, one of the standard images of Byzantine iconography²³. In some instances the throne is shown in perspective, and sometimes not. Testa insists that the throne he sees here is in perspective, because otherwise the small vertical lines in the upper centre of the structure could not be accounted for. These would be the back of the throne, which would then be comparable to the representation in the Arian Baptistery, Ravenna (c.493-520). This throne seen by Testa is, however, unique in having wings to the backrest, which causes it to be a kind of three-sided box. Elsewhere the backrest is depicted as a square. The area of the legs is also usually square²⁴ or rectangular, equal in area to the upper part²⁵. The backrest is sometimes curved²⁶ and elsewhere is absent altogether²⁷. The object depicted in the cave lacks any horizontal line half-way up to indicate the seat or round shapes that could be construed to be arm-rests. The horizontal lines above the medallion (see below) are too high to represent the seat, unless one supposes that this is a throne without a backrest. In this case, however, one would need to explain the vertical protrusions in some other way. One can make a cross out of the intersecting mass of lines of the centre, but the vertical lines on either side cannot be accounted for. It should also be noted that there is

no evidence of red markings which would connect these two protruding vertical lines, either to each other or to the smaller vertical lines, which undermines Testa's view that they constitute parts of the backrest. Further key iconographical features of the throne, which are missing in this image, are a footrest²⁸ and a cushion²⁹.

The intersecting lines, if interpreted as a cross, or cross chi-rho, can be paralleled in other images³⁰, but they may also be interpreted as a book on a stand with the letters alpha and omega. Books or scrolls are found resting on thrones or footstools³¹; in the case of a sixth-century bronze relief in the Hagia Sophia, Constantinople³² the book is propped up so that the pages face outwards. In some cases a peacock is represented in a "medallion" of its outstretched tail feathers³³ otherwise outside³⁴. Elsewhere a dove appears³⁵ or a lamb³⁶, in one case in a medallion³⁷. In many instances the throne is draped with a cloth³⁸.

It is possible to make another suggestion concerning the object depicted here which may be more likely: that the image is of an altar, not of a throne. If the painting does depict an altar, then it would have provided a focal point for visitors, especially since it is found directly opposite the entrance. If it is a throne, of some unusual type, then it would bring the pilgrims to contemplation of the coming judgement. The throne image has been interpreted by Nordström to correlate with the idea of ἐτοιμασία, "preparation,

readiness"³⁹ which Testa has, somewhat strangely, re-interpreted in order to associate it with Jewish-Christians who were preparing to receive charismatic gifts.

The form of the object depicted here would fit well with what we know about the shape of altars at this time. A bare altar is depicted in the ceiling mosaic on the Orthodox Baptistery, Ravenna (c. 430-450)⁴⁰. It consists of four pillar-like legs which stand on a rectangular base. The drawing in the cave also clearly shows pilasters and a base. This kind of altar was typical of the early Byzantine period, and could sometimes be a single sculpted block made to give an illusion of a table resting on four pilasters⁴¹. Fragments of Byzantine altars have been found in many parts of Palestine: Nahariya⁴², Khirbet el-Kuneitrah⁴³, Kh. Siyar El-Ghanam near Beit Sahur⁴⁴, the sixth century monastery of Theoctistus in the Judaeen desert⁴⁵, Ras et-Tawil, 5 km. north of Jerusalem⁴⁶, et-Tabgha⁴⁷, Shavei Zion⁴⁸ and at Khirbet ed-Deir in the Judaeen Desert⁴⁹. The altars were frequently made out of marble. One can see in the red drawing an attempt to show the moulding of the stone and the protrusion at the base of the right colonette. The protruding sides of the table top is easily seen on the upper left side.

In the church of S. Maria della Caponapoli in Naples there is a block altar with, at the centre front, a

medallion containing an image of the rock of Golgotha and the cross⁵⁰, which brings us to a consideration of the circular image at the centre. It certainly appears to be a medallion of some kind. The artist may be attempting to show that it was on a cloth draped over the altar. A cloth probably covered the altar during the course of the celebration of the Eucharist, as is shown in the "Sacrifice of Abel" (c.526-47) in the baptistery of San Vitale, Ravenna⁵¹. In a similar mosaic in Sant'Apollinaire-in-Classa, where Abel presents a lamb to Melchisedek, the table is arrayed with bread and wine, while the cloth over the table is decorated with a rectangular pattern incorporating small crosses. In this instance the structure of the altar is completely obscured by the covering, but here, in the Bethany cave, if we are to imagine a cloth, the structure shows through. The medallion may have contained a pantocrator motif. If so, this would explain the smudges over the lower left perimeter of the circle and over the upper right area, which would correspond to the sweeping movements of a right arm intent on removing a human image. This iconoclasm would have occurred during the eighth century. In A.D.745 all religious art was forbidden in the Eastern Church, and widespread iconoclasm occurred⁵². On the other hand, it must be said that the representation of small crosses seemingly randomly placed around and inside a circle bears a striking resemblance to a plan in the eighth century Book

of Mullins⁵³ of Tech Moling, Co. Carlow, in Ireland, the monastery of the seventh century(?) Saint Moling (Mullins?), which plots the whereabouts of certain named crosses, and it is therefore not impossible that this red "medallion" is also a plan of a circular monastery enclosure or other structure, with crosses representing tombs.

Resting on top of the altar, it may be best to envisage various objects rather than any cohesive structure. In the aforementioned ceiling mosaic of the Orthodox Baptistry, Ravenna, an open book rests on top of the altar. If this is the case here, we can conjecture that there is a depiction of a crucifix, from the arms of which there hang the letters alpha and omega: a common Byzantine type⁵⁴. The usual materials for such crucifixes were gold, silver, iron and other metals. At the top of the vertical bar of the crucifix is a curving line which may indicate the top of a rho, or a small horizontal bar and the extremity of the vertical. If we opt for the latter interpretation, this would mean there were small end-bars at the extremities of all the arms of the cross. Indeed, at the right of the horizontal arm there is an area of coloration which could be understood as another end-bar, but this would make the crucifix very squat. It seems more likely that the area of coloration belongs to something else: a cultic object or candlestick.

The bold vertical lines on either side of the crucifix are quite probably long lamp-stands, of which the Israel Museum possesses a good example in bronze, said to have come from the Hauran⁵⁵.

If the artist wished to depict a cloth over the altar, it would explain why the altar itself is shown only in outline: it indicates a certain transparency in the material. The objects on top of the altar are in solid colour. Certain markings along the upper rim of the altar do not appear to have anything to do with the structure of the utensils, and they are not smudged. They appear to be the remains of writing at the top of the table, as in Hirschfeld's reconstructed piece⁵⁶.

The altar may have been a substitute for a real one, drawn at a late date when Byzantine control over the holy places was weakened by Muslim domination. In the eastern end of the mosaic of the second room of the Beth ha-Shitta monastery complex (eighth century) was a representation of an apsis in the form of an arch with a lamp beneath it, which Avi-Yonah suggests may have been a substitute for a real one⁵⁷.

The faded red inscription, composed in a loose cursive script, appears to run on either side of the central altar. Only a small section in the far right is even slightly legible. It may well have provided a positive identification for the cave's employment, but in the absence of infra-red illumination which may show up further traces of the red markings, personal observation

leads one to agree only in part with Benoit and Boismard's reading of the letters on the far right side as:

θ€. €ΙΩθ€Ι. Φ€ΙΛ.. ΑΛΦ...

ΛΟΥΕCΘΕΑ . ΟΥΠΟΔΥCΟΥ⁵⁶

Their reading of θ€. €ΙΩθ€Ι seems doubtful on the basis of what remains (see Figure 15 and Photo 7). There is clearly a csi after the first epsilon, and the following letter is more likely to be a nun than an iota. Moreover their third epsilon, with iota, appears to be an eta. The initial θ is also doubtful, and may be connected with red markings which precede it, which Benoit and Boismard ignore. In short, the word ἐξεvώθῃ "he was lodged", 1 Aorist of ξενόω can be distinguished.

This reading would support an identification of the cave as the hospitium, "guest-room", of Martha and Mary (cf. Matt. 21:17; Mark 11:11-12; Luke 10:38 cf. Matt. 26:6), which I have argued for elsewhere⁵⁷. It was a pilgrim site known to Jerome (Ep. cviii.12), which was located in between Bethphage and the Lazarium at Bethany. The fact that it is a cave and not a proper house, as Jerome's words might seem to imply, is no obstacle. Caves were frequently identified as dwelling-places without mention that they were grottos: for example the Piacenza Pilgrim appears to refer to the Cave of the Annunciation as "the house of St. Mary" (Itin. v) and Jerome fails to mention that there was a cave in the

Bethlehem sanctuary in his account of Paula's journey (Ep. cviii.10) and refers to it as an "inn" (diversorium) and a "stable" (stabulum). When Jerome refers to the cave in two other letters he uses only the word diversorium (Ep. xlvi.11; lxxvii.2), and does not mention that it was a grotto.

It has been assumed by others that the sanctuary of the hospitium was attached to the Lazarium at Bethany⁶⁰, but the seventh-century Jerusalem calendar has the feast of Martha and Mary celebrated on the fourth of June in a church "on the mountain above Bethany"⁶¹ which would accord very well with the location of the cave. Later tradition relocated the site. In the Middle Ages, the house of Simon, where Mary Magdalene washed the feet of Christ and was forgiven her sins, was located within the actual town⁶². This site appears to have been within the Church of Lazarus (cf. Saewulf, xxiii) as Theoderic (xxxv) refers to the "double church": one part of which was for Lazarus' tomb and the other for Martha and Mary "and there our Lord and Saviour used often to be entertained"⁶³. A later relocation of the holy site would fit with the evidence of abandonment of the veneration of the Bethany cave at the end of the seventh century. If it was no longer visited after this time, and over the centuries forgotten, then it would have been necessary for the Crusaders to choose a fresh site for the house of Martha and Mary.

The early history of the cave is less difficult to

ascertain. It was not part of a real dwelling, but was a cistern of a common type, known, for example, at Tel Zakariya, Gezer, Samaria, Ein Karim, Hebron, Jerusalem and in other parts of Bethany, as Benoit and Boismard point out⁶⁴. It appears to have been converted to holy use in the Byzantine period, which accounts for the lack of remains before this time.

In conclusion, the cave of Bethany was in religious use from the fourth to the seventh centuries, when it was identified as the hospitium of Martha and Mary. Prior to this time it was employed as a cistern. There is no evidence that Jewish-Christians ever venerated the site or ate a special meal here. The graffiti on the walls and the red drawing should not be given a Jewish-Christian interpretation; they can be understood better in the context of the the established norms of Byzantine iconography and epigraphy.

Gethsemane

As we have just seen, Testa believes that Jewish-Christians ate a meal symbolising the messianic banquet "e la moltuplicarono nei vari luoghi ove si era svolta la vita del Cristo"⁶⁵; the various places being Bethany, Gethsemane and Zion, in accordance with his interpretation of Eutychius of Constantinople. It is to the second of these places that we shall now turn: the cave of Gethsemane, known as "the Grotto of the

Betrayal".

It may seem strange to many Christians today that the betrayal was thought to have taken place in a cave and not in a garden; the Garden of Gethsemane has been a long-established traditional feature of the Passion story in popular understanding. In fact, there is no such place as "the garden of Gethsemane" in the Gospels, and it does not look as though early Christian pilgrims imagined that they should find such a locality either. This no doubt explains why it was many centuries before a "garden of Gethsemane" is mentioned on the Mount of Olives.

The first attestation of a place somewhere on the Mount of Olives where Jesus was betrayed is found in the account given by the Bordeaux Pilgrim of A.D. 333. Inexplicably, Testa translates the petra of the account (Itin. Burd. 594) as "cave". In doing so he is able to find a definite literary attestation of this locality as early as the first part of the fourth century⁶⁶. The pilgrim in fact writes that as one ascends the Mount of Olives from the valley "which is called Jehoshaphat, to the left, where there are vineyards, is a mass of rock where Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ"⁶⁷. The petra, would correspond very well with the mass of rock, 90 metres south of the cave and above it on the hill, which is now incorporated into the Church of All Nations. There is no reason to presume that the pilgrim really meant to

indicate the cave, but there is no reason either to presume that the pilgrim meant to say that the mass of rock was the site known as "Gethsemane". If someone told him that Judas betrayed Christ "just there", and yet failed to inform him that this was well-known as Gethsemane, we are none the wiser as to the location of the latter even if the pilgrim himself would have assumed this to be the case.

The traditions concerning the precise location of the betrayal underwent slight modifications during the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, but the locality of Gethsemane itself appears to have been remembered, even if it was not at first associated with the betrayal so much as Jesus' prayer. Eusebius described Gethsemane (Γεθσεμανῆ) as being: "a place (χωρίον) where Christ prayed before the passion. It lies on (πρὸς) the Mount of Olives, on which (ἐν ᾧ) even now the faithful earnestly offer prayers," (Onom. 74.16-18). Eusebius' language is vague. Because he is echoing the usage of the Gospels, where Gethsemane is described as a χωρίον (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32), he does not require us to think either of a cave or a mass of rock. Both χωρίον and τῷ ὅρει τῶν ἐλαιῶν may be referred to by the relative pronoun, but since it is found in the second sentence of the description it most naturally refers to the Mount of Olives. It is strongly implied, however, that the reason the faithful offer prayers is because of Christ's prayer at Gethsemane. One may wonder therefore

if, at the very beginning of the fourth century, Gethsemane was in some way out of bounds. The rock pointed out to the Bordeaux Pilgrim may indeed have been used by Christian for want of access to the real place.

Nevertheless, even by the time of the Bordeaux Pilgrim, we are not told that the mass of rock was actually utilised by Christians, and he does not go there to pray. It was simply one of the geological features Christians had begun to identify as significant in the life of Christ. However, some fifty years later, Egeria provides information which demonstrates that great progress had taken place in the development of the area.

Egeria mentions a graceful church (ecclesia ... elegans) located where the Lord prayed (Itin. xxxvi.1). This is undoubtedly the same church as that referred to by Jerome (Lib. loc. 75.19). Their references are to the Byzantine church uncovered in 1919⁶⁸, south of the cave of Gethsemane. This church was 20 metres long and 16 metres wide, and incorporated the mass of rock so that it lay immediately in front of the central apse, before the altar, precisely where it is positioned in the present Church of All Nations, which has incorporated the remains of the Byzantine structure.

Vincent⁶⁹ is responsible for the prevalent idea⁷⁰ that this church was constructed during the reign of Theodosius (379-395), which may well be the case, but the source he uses as evidence, Eutychius of Alexandria

(Annales 1.536) refers not to the Byzantine Church of the Agony but to the Tomb of the Virgin at Gethsemane when he writes: "King Theodosius built in Jerusalem the Gethsemane church in which there is the tomb of Saint Mary, which the Persians destroyed at the time they destroyed the churches of Jerusalem,"⁷¹ (see below, Chapter 11). The rock of the Agony was not considered to be part of "Gethsemane" until recent times. Egeria (Itin. xxxvi.2), for example, refers to "Gethsemane" as a place further down the hill from the Church of the Agony. Interestingly, Cyril distinguishes between Gethsemane "where the betrayal took place" and somewhere else on the Mount of Olives "where they who were with him that night were praying" (Cat. xiii.38). Certainly, the betrayal was firmly located here by the time Cyril wrote (c.350), and despite Cyril's mention of the disciples' praying elsewhere, it was Jesus' prayer that was in the main detached from this site. When Jerome encountered Eusebius' mention of Gethsemane being the place where Christ prayed before the Passion, he knew only that the nearby rock was the place identified as the spot where Christ prayed. In attempting continuity with Eusebius' mention of prayer (since his aim was, after all, to translate and update Eusebius and not write an entirely new book), he referred to the church along with the site of Gethsemane, but whether he meant to imply that this church was built directly on top of the Gethsemane cave is debatable. Jerome writes: "Gethsemani, the place where

the Lord prayed before the Passion; but above (desuper), at the foot of the Mount of Olives, a church is now built." (Lib. loc. 75.18-19)⁷². Desuper may be understood as "upon" (cf. Jerome's Vulgate: Matt. 21:7) but its basic meaning in late Roman Latin is simply "above"⁷³. The Byzantine Church of the Agony was literally above the cave in height on the hill, and pilgrims understood it to be so. Hesychius of Jerusalem (fl. c.440), for example, says that Gethsemane lies at the foot of the Mount of Olives and that from here Jesus withdrew a stone's throw towards the top of the Mount to pray, thereafter returning to Gethsemane where he was arrested (Diff. xxxvi)⁷⁴.

Subsequent Byzantine and Medieval pilgrims always make a distinction between "Gethsemane", understood to be the cave and its immediate vicinity (which would incorporate the later garden and the Tomb of the Virgin), and the place of Christ's solitary prayer, which was seen to be above the cave, further up the hill⁷⁵. The twelfth century Qualiter has a reference to the "Garden of Gethsemane" where the Lord prayed with his disciples and where he was betrayed by Judas, which is not a reference to the place of the Agony, since the Gethsemane cave itself was, at least after Cyril, generally understood to be where Jesus and his disciples foregathered for prayer (cf. John Phocas, xv.1). The Guide in Gesta Francorum Expugnantium (xiv), familiar only with the church at

Mary's tomb as being "at Gethsemane", simply assumes that Jerome is making a reference to this building, not to the Church of the Agony.

Peter the Deacon (Lib. I) mentions that there was a church "above" (supra) a cave on the other side of the Kidron and, as with Jerome, he surely means "on the hill above" and not "directly over" the cave. This description by Peter must in fact come from Egeria, because the church was destroyed by the end of the eighth century, 300 years before Peter wrote. The church is last attested in Hugeburc's Life of Willibald (xxi) written c.780 but reporting here the year 724. The cave seems to be identified by Peter the Deacon as the place where "the Jews arrested the Saviour", just as it was identified by pilgrims after Egeria. In the present text of Egeria's account (Itin. xxxvi.2-3), she writes that from the church commemorating where Christ prayed, where they had gone at dawn, the party of pilgrims celebrating Passion week slowly descend in Gessamani. Here the pilgrims are provided with hundreds of church candles "so that they can all see". At this place they have a prayer, a hymn, and a reading from the Gospel about the Lord's arrest. Although it is not specifically stated here that the pilgrims went into the cave, Egeria's description would cohere perfectly with its location and character. It is true that the mention of church candles may indicate only that it was still very dark outside, since Egeria goes on to say that the time when people could first recognise

each other occurred as the group reached the gate of the city, after the service at Gethsemane (xxxvi.3), but the group had already been walking around the Mount in darkness all through the night without the aid of candles. The provision of candles would certainly fit well with their arrival at the cave, where it was necessary for the service that everyone should see adequately. Most importantly, Egeria identifies "Gethsemane" as being the place where Jesus was arrested.

Clearly, then, there are two distinct places in the region which, by the end of the fourth century, were venerated by Christians. One was the rock where Jesus was thought to have prayed and the other was "Gethsemane" proper, a cave in which Jesus was thought to have been arrested in the company of his disciples.

As we have seen, about thirty years before Egeria, Cyril of Jerusalem attested that Gethsemane was the place where Jesus was arrested and, "shows Judas still to the eyes of our imagination" (cf. Cat. x.19, cf. xiii.38) but he too fails to mention that the locality was a cave. The Breviarius has a reference to the same place of arrest, and includes, for the first time in the tradition history, a mention of a final supper eaten by Jesus and his disciples at the place (Breviarius, Form B, vii). Had there existed a pre-Byzantine custom of eating a supper at the cave in commemoration of one celebrated by Jesus and his disciples, it is surprising that it does not

surface into the literary evidence until this stage, in the sixth century. From this point on, however, the supper forms a part of the mythology of the holy site. Now too we find the first attestations, apart from Peter the Deacon's later record of Egeria's observations, that "Gethsemane" was in fact a cave. Theodosius (De Situ x) writes of a cave in which there were four "couches" for the twelve apostles. People came here to light lamps and eat food in the place where Christ washed the apostles' feet. The Piacenza Pilgrim of 570 (Itin. xvii) writes that there were three (an error?) "couches" in the place where the Lord was betrayed, failing, as those before him, to mention that it was a cave. By the time of Arculf the four rock "couches" were understood to be tables. One was just inside the entrance to the cave, and the others were further in. There were also two cisterns of great depth (Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. i.15.1-3⁷⁶). A further interpretation of the rock ledges is provided by Epiphanius the Monk (Hag. viii.14-20), who explains that they are thrones on which Christ and the twelve apostles will sit to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. He writes that at the head of one of these was a cavity in the floor occupied by "spirits"; clearly a reference to a cistern. Bernard the Monk (Itin. xiii) reports that there were four round tables for the supper in the "church"; he too fails to mention it was a cave. It is most likely that the idea of placing the supper in the cave arose to explain the existence of these rock-cut

ledges, which are no longer extant. In the Middle Ages, pilgrims understood these to be the beds where the disciples went to sleep (Saewulf, xvii; Theoderic, xxiv, Second Guide cxxiv).

Testa would see in the sixth-century practice of eating a meal in the Gethsemane cave (Theodosius, De Situ x) a continuation of an ancient, albeit hypothetical, Jewish-Christian rite. This is very doubtful. The accounts by Byzantine pilgrims show that they shared Eutychius of Constantinople's belief that Jesus ate a supper in this place with his disciples. The belief itself accounted for their habit of eating here. Whatever Jesus experienced at any given holy site, pilgrims enacted an abbreviated version of the same, in order to enter into Christ's life more fully. They filled a water-pot at Cana (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. iv) or drank from it (Hugeburc, Vita Will. xxiii). They drank from the sponge allegedly used at the crucifixion (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xx, cf. Matt. 27:48) and bathed at the Place of Baptism at the Jordan (Hugeburc, Vita. Will. xvi). Most notably, they followed the course of Christ's Passion in a series of processions from the Mount of Olives to the Edicule at Golgotha: a practice which continues to this day.

Returning now to the identification of a cave as "Gethsemane", it was noted above that Eusebius is echoing the Gospels in using the word $\chiωρίον$ to refer to

Gethsemane. It does not follow that he could not be referring to a cave, simply because he fails to mention it as such. By the end of the fourth century we know that the cave was considered the location of the betrayal, and yet subsequent pilgrims are frequently silent about its character as such. Of the nineteen Medieval guides and pilgrim itineraries which mention the site of the betrayal, only six mention the fact that the place was a cave (Daniel the Abbot, Zhitie xx; De Situ Urbis Jerusalem 07; Belard of Ascoli, i; John of Würzburg, cxxxvii-cxxxviii; Theoderic, xxiv; John Phocas, xv.4-5). Others refer to Gethsemane as a "house", "farm" or even "village" depending on how they interpret Jerome's Vulgate translation of χωρὶον as villa (Matt. 26:36) and praedium (Mark 14:32). Jerome clearly understood χωρὶον to have some agricultural associations if he could translate it as either as "estate" or "farm". Unfortunately, villa was a sufficiently loose word in itself to account for numerous further interpretations. Origen's Commentary on Matthew, which survives only in the Latin translation, has praedium⁷⁷, from which we can infer that Origen used the word χωρὶον as in Matthew 26:34 and Mark 14:32.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the cave of Gethsemane was indeed used for agricultural purposes during the Roman period⁷⁸. The cave has been greatly changed over the course of the centuries, but its dimensions appear to have remained much the same (see

Figure 16). It is extremely large, measuring approximately 11 by 18 metres and was supported by four rock-cut pilasters, of which three still exist in the present shrine. The remains of the original entrance can be seen on the north side. A roughly square artificial cave cut into the eastern side housed a press. The evidence for this is a hole cut into the south wall of this recess, which was to hold the wooden horizontal bar of the olive-press⁷⁹. We can be sure that the press was for olives, and not for grapes, because wine-presses are never found underground. Caves were used for oil-presses on account of their warmth⁸⁰. There are many examples of underground olive-presses in the region of Beth Guvrin⁸¹. A gutter to the right of the present entrance, along with a cistern, also suggests an agricultural use. A drain was carved into the outside north wall which led to a small pool and then to the cistern. A hole was cut in the ceiling of the cave for light and ventilation, and below it was another cistern to collect rainwater. The rock-cut pilasters may also date from the time of the cave's earliest use. The four rock "couches" attested by pilgrims may have been the remaining "uprights" of screw operated presses⁸².

It is well-known that the meaning of the Greek $\tau\epsilon\theta\rho\eta\mu\alpha\nu\acute{\iota}$ (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32) is "oil-press", from conjectural Hebrew גֵּת-שֶׁמֶן . The word גֵּת like Syriac ܩܬܐ frequently means "wine-press"; nevertheless

תַּל is sometimes found as a place for the preparation of oil (j. Peah 7:1; t. Ter. 3:6). The broader meaning of the word is any cistern or pit excavated for a particular purpose (cf. m. Zeb. 14:1). The word מִיָּנִי, in plural, is used for kinds of oil (b. Sabb. 2:2), gifts of oil (j. Bez. 1:9) and oil stores (b. Midd. 2:5)²³. As we have seen, Matthew and Mark refer to this Gethsemane as being a "place" Χωρίον, and not a garden. Luke (22:39-40) has it that Jesus went "to the spot" (ἐπὶ τοῦ τόπου) on the Mount of Olives. Only in John (18:1) is there any mention of a garden (κήπος) on the other side of the Kidron Valley. It is from the conflation of the Johannine and the Synoptic traditions that we arrive at the concept of a "Garden of Gethsemane". It is even possible that John is referring to the whole cultivated area of the Mount of Olives itself, since κήπος can mean any cultivated tract of land from a small herb garden to a plantation or an orchard, and John does not otherwise mention the Mount of Olives at all. Eusebius himself seems to do the same in his spiritual reading of Zech. 14:4, where the Lord's olive garden (his Church) is identified with the Mount (Dem. Evang. vi.18). Whatever the case, John, like Luke, refers to the actual spot where Jesus and his disciples were gathered as τὸν τόπον, ὅτι πολλάκις συνήχθη Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ (John 18:2).

If the cave was used as a large oil-pressing works, which the meagre archaeological evidence would tend to suggest, and since the New Testament accounts write of

Jesus and his disciples spending the night in a place called "oil-press" on the Mount of Olives, there is good reason to put the two together. One can, of course, only stress probabilities. The cave is unusual because of its impressive size. As an important oil-pressing works, it would have been well-known. If it continued to be used as an oil-pressing works for the olive groves of the Mount, and there is no evidence that it did not, then there is reason to suppose that the local population continued to call the place "oil-press". It should not seem at all strange if Jesus and his disciples decided to use this cave as a place to sleep. As anyone who has camped out in the Judaeian hills knows, the dew is heavy, especially in spring, and the nights can be very cold (cf. John 18:18). No one in their right mind would think of sleeping under the stars at this time of year. Dalman suggests that oil-presses were used only in the autumn³⁴, so that by the Passover it would not have been occupied.

Whether the property was personal or communal is not known but, if by the time of Eusebius the public or private owner was not as sympathetic to the Jerusalem Christians as the first-century owner to Jesus and his followers, this would account for the faithful of the early fourth century not going to Gethsemane itself to pray. Shortly after Constantine secured the East, though probably not quite in time for the visit of the Bordeaux Pilgrim, the site was appropriated by the Church, along

with an adjacent site, and these were determined to commemorate two important actions in the course of Jesus' Passion: the cave of Gethsemane was understood to be where Jesus was arrested, and the nearby mass of rock was where he went to pray. The hypothesis that Jewish-Christians used the cave for their supposed suppers, however, is an idea unsupported by any evidence at all.

Neither the Bethany cave nor the cave of Gethsemane can therefore be understood as places frequented by Jewish-Christians. The former was a cistern during the Roman period, and was adopted as the "guest-room" of Martha and Mary early in the Byzantine period. The Gethsemane cave was an olive-pressing works, which may well have been the actual place where Jesus and his disciples used to spend their nights. Its later identification by Byzantine Christians depended on the continuation of its name and its agricultural use, combined with the traditions of the Jerusalem community, but not (necessarily) on any continuous veneration from apostolic times.

CHAPTER TEN

MOUNT ZION

Bethany and Gethsemane, two places to which Eutychius of Constantinople refers when he describes the pilgrim practice of eating meals at certain sites, are listed with a third: Mount Zion (Serm. Pasch. iii). Pilgrims refer to a great basilica on this hill named "Holy Zion"¹, but the first evidence of pilgrims believing that a/the last supper was celebrated here comes from the fifth century² with (Ps-?)Hesychius (Comm. in Psalm. l.17; liv.14; cix.2; Serm. viii)³. The basilica was not constructed to commemorate the last supper, and it is perhaps because of this that Bagatti and Testa do not linger long in consideration of Eutychius' text in regard to this site, but prefer to concentrate on other evidence which they allege demonstrates Jewish-Christian occupation⁴; on Mount Zion we are to imagine the first church of James, the Jewish-Christian mother church.

At the outset, it should be remembered that "Mount Zion" of the Byzantines was not the Zion of the Old Testament, which was the eastern hill of Jerusalem, now known as the City of David (2 Sam. 5:7). The displacement of Zion is, of course, one of the most notorious examples of a lack of continuity of geographical identifications in Jerusalem. In the

Herodian period the area now known as Mount Zion was the affluent part of the Upper City that lay immediately south of the great palace of Herod^s. The suggestion that the area was the Essene Quarter, which then became Christian, has been made by B. Pixner^s. However, archaeological excavations have brought to light frescoes (with representations of birds) and mosaics which are more consistent with the usual interpretation that this was an upper class residential area, not a lower class or religiously puritan one. Certainly, the socio-economic character of this part of Jerusalem would make it very unlikely that Christians had their main centre in this quarter. The early Christians were not an upper class movement, and it would be very surprising indeed to find their principal base among the residences of the very chief priests, Herodians and other privileged persons they most scorned; this was Jerusalem's Belgravia, not its Bethnal Green.

The Byzantine decision to believe that the hill of Mount Zion formed part of the city of Jerusalem at the time of Jesus owed something to the fact that ruins were still visible in the area, but also owed something to fourth-century logic. Josephus had connected "Zion" with the "stronghold" of "Acra" (BJ 1.39; v.137), which the Byzantines took to be a reference to the higher southwestern hill (Jerome, Vita Paul. xlvi.5; Comm. Esa. li.17ff).

Eusebius writes that Mount Zion was "a hill in Jerusalem" (Onom. 162.12) and that "near the northern parts of Mount Zion" Golgotha was pointed out (Onom. 74.19) as was Akeldama (Onom. 38.20-1), but otherwise Eusebius prefers to keep with the Old Testament usage of the term, as a reference to the Temple Mount (Comm. Esa. xxii.1; Comm. Psalm. lxxiii.2), or all of Jerusalem (Comm. Psalm. lxiv.2; lxxv.3). Since it is very difficult to determine in each instance of the word precisely which Zion is referred to by Eusebius, his words are more helpful for what they do not say than for what they do. Eusebius mentions Mount Zion repeatedly in Demonstratio Evangelica (vi.13), probably making reference to the south-western hill, without once mentioning that it was the locality of the first church in Jerusalem: a glaring omission if this was believed at the time.

Did the Jerusalem church have a permanent centre outside Aelia on Mount Zion? Nowhere does Eusebius mention that the Christian community, whether past or present, met in this area. His remarks on the chair of James might suggest that the object was in the keeping of successive members (leaders?) of the Jerusalem community, but that it had no definite home (Hist. Eccles. vii.19): "until now in this way the brothers in turn look after what is kept (i.e. the throne)"⁷. Eusebius does not say it had been housed in some particular church in Jerusalem, but rather that it was looked after by certain

members of the Christian community. This is quite understandable if one remembers the fear of persecution experienced by Christians prior to Constantine. A permanent base, where sacred texts and treasured objects were deposited, would have been an invitation to arsonists and vandals (as Christians discovered to their cost). One would need to question whether it is necessary to envisage one particular location as being the site of church assemblies, from the earliest days onwards, in the light of the political and religious climate of the times prior to the Peace of the Church. Certainly, there would have been, at any one moment, a main meeting place, perhaps where the bishop lived or else a simple house-church like that of Dura Europos; and yet one must also remember that the earliest celebrations of the agapē meal would have taken place in numerous abodes, since the membership of the church of Jerusalem was too large for all to be accommodated at one dinner. It is interesting that nowhere do we find any reference to where the Christians of Jerusalem were meeting at the actual time of Constantine's victory over Licinius, let alone before this date.

In A.D. 333, the Bordeaux Pilgrim records that there had been seven synagogues which stood on Mount Zion, but only one remained. The rest had been "ploughed and sown" (Itin. Burd. 592). The pilgrim's language echoes Micah (3:12), "Zion shall be ploughed like a field, and

Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins," (cf. Eusebius, Dem. Evang. vi.13, viii.3). Cyril would describe Zion as "a watchman's shelter in a vineyard; a shed in a field of cucumbers," (Is. I:7, cf. Epiphanius, De Mens. et Pond. xiv). The images used must have been considered appropriate to describe the appearance of the area, which lay outside the precincts of Aelia Capitolina. They suggest that Zion was a region of ruins, and yet also one of agriculture. If this is so, even leaving aside the fact that Jews did not live in Jerusalem during this period, it is unlikely that the synagogue was used. After all, Eusebius explicitly states that synagogues had been established everywhere in Palestine apart from Jerusalem and Mount Zion (Dem. Evang. vi.13).

It is Cyril of Jerusalem who mentions, for the first time, "the upper church of the Apostles" (Cat. xvi.4, PG 33, 924) on Zion. The language may recall the upper room where the disciples gathered when the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost, even though Cyril does not specifically mention the event, but it may also imply that there existed a "lower church of the Apostles" which had been used by Jerusalem Christians in Aelia for a certain period up until the time of the building of the new basilica on Mount Zion. We know from Cyril's attestation of the existence of the church on Mount Zion that it had been built by A.D.348. We also know, from Optatus of Milevis, that by 370 the synagogue mentioned by the Bordeaux Pilgrim had disappeared (Schism. Don., PL

11, 994). In 392, Epiphanius (De Mens. et Pond. xiv) presented the same legend as that given to the Bordeaux Pilgrim; he reports that there were seven synagogues on Mount Zion, one of which stood until the time of Bishop Maximus (335-49) and the Emperor Constantine (till 337). We know then that the church appeared between 333 and 348 and that, apparently, the synagogue disappeared at the very same time.

Epiphanius alone records a quite separate tradition about a church on Mount Zion. According to him, when the Emperor Hadrian entered the city after defeating Bar Kochba, he found Mount Zion in ruins, except for a few houses:

The little house of the community of God alone remained, where the disciples went up to the upper room after their return from the Ascension of the Saviour from the Mount of Olives.

De Mens. et Pond. xiv

It should be remembered that Epiphanius is writing almost fifty years after the Byzantine church on Mount Zion had been built. It was already known as being on the site of the house with the "upper room" of Acts 1:13. A few years earlier, Egeria had described the church on Mount Zion as being the place where Jesus appeared after the Resurrection (Itin. xxxix.5; xl.5) and at Pentecost (Itin. xliii.3, cf. Eucherius, Ep. Faust. iv, Pet. Diac., Lib. E). Therefore, the identification of the upper room as lying under the site of the Byzantine church had been made already; what is interesting is Epiphanius'

allegation that the house-church was standing when Hadrian entered the city. We have no way of assessing the historical reliability of this statement. All we do know is that there is no mention of the house-church standing two hundred years later. It is just possible that the Byzantine Christian community identified the newly-named Mount Zion as being the region in which stood an early house-church because they had managed to preserve a recollection of this fact, despite losing the memory of the region's name, but it is very significant that Eusebius fails to mention this in any of his works.

Bagatti puts the two traditions (the seven synagogues of which one remained and the house-church of the early disciples) together in a neat package that would require us to imagine that the synagogue and the house-church were one and the same². Elsewhere, Bagatti has argued that the Byzantine church on Mount Zion was built in the years 397-417, during the bishopric of John II³, which would mean that Cyril (Cat. xvi.4) is referring to his proposed synagogue-church rather than the new basilica. Bagatti's argument rests on the historical value of the attestation in a Georgian lectionary of the eighth century that John II was responsible for the "first building of Sion"⁴. However, E. D. Hunt, who has examined the contemporary^{2c} account by Lucianus (Ep. Luciani, PL 41, 807ff) of the discovery of the remains of Saint Stephen in 415 A.D., in which Bishop

John plays a key role, is extremely doubtful about the liturgical calendar's historicity in this matter. In the story as told by Lucianus, John transfers the remains of the saint to the great basilica on Mount Zion, built on the alleged site of the church in which Stephen was believed to have been an archdeacon (sanctam ecclesiam Sion, ubi et archdiaconus fuerat ordinatus, Ep. Luciani viii). In this account, which is almost panegyric in its approach to John, the basilica is already standing. According to Hunt, the event was sufficiently celebrated that it may have been the foundation of the much later tradition found in the lectionary that bishop John himself built the church¹¹. It should be remembered that today's tradition in the Palestinian churches would credit Helena with the foundation of most of the Byzantine churches in Palestine, a tradition first attested in an anonymous Life of Constantine of the eighth or ninth century¹²; later foundation legends need not bear any great resemblance to historical fact.

There is therefore no reason to doubt that Cyril is referring to the great basilica which was constructed on Mount Zion in the fourth century. If we turn now to archaeological evidence, however, we get very little to clarify what we already can assume from the texts.

In 1951, J. Pinkerfeld removed the plaster from the area of David's Tomb on Mount Zion, which is a largely Crusader structure, and the walls were examined. It was noted that there were remains of ancient masonry

preserved on the north, east and south of the eastern part of the building (see Figure 17). Pinkerfeld felt that the stones used were too large for a domestic building (they measure between 49 and 100 cm. wide) and alleged that a first century synagogue forms the structural basis of the Crusader building. According to him, this synagogue measures 10.50 x 5.80 metres, and has a niche on the north wall, in the direction of the Jewish Temple. The niche is 2.48 m. in diameter, 1.20 m. deep and 2.44 m. high. The bottom of this niche is 1.92 m. higher than the present floor, which is 70 cm. above the original floor, so that the bottom of the niche was 2.62 above the original floor. Pinkerfeld suggested that the niche was meant for Torah scrolls (cf. the synagogues of Naveh, Eshtemoa, Arbel)¹³. The finely executed masonry was considered typical of the Late Roman period¹⁴. The area around this building included outbuildings, the remains of which were discovered in 1859 by E. Pierotti¹⁵. Bagatti distinguished in Pinkerfeld's synagogue the house-church/synagogue he imagined to have existed from his amalgamation of traditions.

However, doubts have been expressed which question whether the structure was a synagogue¹⁶. Indeed, the niche is too high for it to be for Torah scrolls; one would certainly have needed a ladder. It would be more suitable as a niche for a statuette. The niche is not in the centre of the preserved ancient wall; on the east it

is 1.20 m. from the corner of the wall, but on the west side the wall continues for 2.60 m. without any indication of a corner of another wall having ever existed. If the niche is to be centred, using the known corner as a guide, then the "synagogue" would have been only 4.88 m. wide, which is rather narrow for its length. The ancient walls on the south side also show no signs whatsoever of any corner where one might expect it. The wall continues westwards for approximately 10 m. without interruption. The size of the blocks of stone used are inconsistent with the tiny size proposed for this synagogue. The blocks measure 90 - 108 cm. on the south-east angle, a size more appropriate for the outside walls of a far larger structure. Wilkinson has argued convincingly that all the walls are Byzantine, the remains of the south-eastern corner of the basilical Church of Holy Zion, on the basis of the disproportionate niche. The wall in which the niche is found is, according to Wilkinson, "a short projection forming the exterior of an inscribed apse"¹⁷. The suggestion that the masonry was Byzantine was made by Vincent¹⁸, and despite the discovery of the niche and speculations that its use was Jewish rather than Christian, there seems no very good reason to doubt that he was correct.

Those who advocate the synagogue theory usually fail to mention that among the fragments of plaster scraped off the wall in the course of Pinkerfeld's excavations were pieces with Greek graffiti¹⁹ which are presumably

the work of Christian pilgrims. The fact that the walls are blackened by fire around the niche would accord with the fact that the Church of Holy Zion was burnt by the Persians in 615 (Antiochus Mon., Ep. Eust. PG 89, 1427; Strategius, Capt. xiii.15) and again in 965 (Yahya ibn Said of Antioch, Annals, PO 18, 183). It was in ruins when the Crusaders arrived. During their rebuilding, it was understandable that they would make use of part of the destroyed basilica. Those who support the synagogue theory must imagine that, despite the evidence to the contrary, there were no Byzantine remains whatsoever in this area, and that the Crusaders built directly on top of remarkably well-preserved late Roman walls. This does not seem very likely.

Not only do the blackened walls and the graffiti point to a Byzantine date, but the only other Byzantine remains that have been uncovered are aligned with the ancient walls of the Tomb of David²⁰. In 1899, H. Renard discovered a section of wall with a doorway which he dated to the Byzantine period²¹. His area was re-excavated in 1983 by E. Eisenberg²² who was able to confirm Renard's dating. Two column drums were also found, which came from the atrium of the basilica. Eisenberg also discovered north of the Dormitian Abbey the north-west corner of the Crusader Church of St. Mary, which also aligns with the walls of the Cenacle and Tomb of David, and corresponds with the orientation of the

Crusader walls uncovered by Renard. M. Gisler excavated a small garden opposite the Dormition Abbey in 1935, where massive foundations (4 metres broad) and walls were discovered and found to be on the same axis as those uncovered by Renard²³. It would seem very likely in view of the relationship between the Crusader and Byzantine masonry that the Crusader church was built on what could be salvaged of the Byzantine foundations and sub-structural walls.

While it is initially tempting to see the surviving synagogue described by the Pilgrim of Bordeaux and Epiphanius as being that which Pinkerfeld has identified, his identification does not, in the end, stand up against an argument that the ancient walls of the area of David's Tomb are Byzantine. The synagogue of the literary sources was presumably obliterated when the great basilica was constructed. Renard estimated that this basilica was 60 m. in length and 40 m. wide. In the Madaba Mosaic it is depicted as the largest church in the city. There was certainly no reason for the Byzantine architects to wish this synagogue ruin to be preserved. If it is not to be equated with the ancient walls of the eastern part of the Tomb of David, there is also no reason to imagine that the synagogue was considered by the Byzantines to be the first house-church, where the disciples of Jesus met together. Whatever traditions were in existence concerning the early community and Mount Zion, they were not attached to any particular ruin.

This examination therefore finds no evidence that would prove that a Jewish-Christian community existed on Mount Zion at any time.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES III: THE TOMB OF THE VIRGIN

In 1972, after the church of the Tomb of the Virgin was flooded, the Greek and Armenian monks in charge of the site decided to restore the structure, and invited Fr. Bagatti to make observations and take photographs in order to illuminate its history¹. However, it was not on account of new archaeological information that he argued for an early veneration of the tomb, for Bagatti had already suggested this before the flood². Despite the fact that there is good reason to suppose that a tomb (of what type is impossible to say, though Bagatti believes it to be first century³) was identified as that belonging to the Virgin Mary, and that it was carved away from the hillside in like manner to the supposed tomb of Christ at Golgotha⁴, Bagatti stresses the importance of literary sources as evidence for the site's early history.

Bagatti concentrates on the range of apocryphal literature dealing with the death and assumption of Mary⁵. While he notes that the texts show signs of modification over time to suit a "liturgical reading", he asserts that there are many "original parts"⁶. Bagatti believes this because he can distinguish pre-Nicene theological expressions in the story. He writes:

The Transitus Mariae is considered a legendary document composed about the 4th century, but with the new studies, which have brought to light the

theological terminology of Judaeo-Christians, one has to admit that the document is one of that sect, composed during the 2nd-3rd century.⁷

The "theological terminology of Judaeo-Christians" includes references to the "Christus-angel", "cosmic ladder", "seven skies" and "secrets" which one most naturally associates with Gnosticism. The "new studies" are simply by Bagatti himself⁸.

Bagatti's argument is that the references in the Ethiopic text of the Transitus Mariae attributed to Leucius⁹ and in the manuscript Vat. 1982¹⁰, which describe the tomb of Mary on the "left side of the city" or in the Kidron Valley (Ethiopic text), are pre-Byzantine. If they are pre-Byzantine, then we must, according to Bagatti, see in these texts evidence of Jewish-Christian veneration of the tomb¹¹. He believes the Jewish-Christians built no structure and were content to worship in the bare tomb, without leaving so much as a scribble on the wall to record their presence. This runs against Testa's understanding of the "Jewish-Christian" mentality since, according to him, the Jewish-Christians appear to have been under some compulsion to scratch strange mystical symbols on the walls of their venerated grottos (a tenet which underlies Testa's Il Simbolismo dei Giudeo-Cristiani). The existing walls of the tomb have no graffiti of an early date.

The texts themselves have yet to be given a proper form critical study, which would illuminate the

development of the traditions contained within them, but a few cursory remarks should be sufficient to cast doubt upon Bagatti's reasoning. In the first place, despite the Gnostic terminology, there is nothing to indicate that the texts are prior to the fourth century. In the second place, it should be noted that the Mount of Olives and the Kidron Valley were the traditional cemeteries of Jerusalem, so that, if the origins of these apocryphal texts are to be placed prior to the fourth century, one might at most suggest that the author(s) had some knowledge of this fact. Bagatti himself points out that only in the later Byzantine period is the tomb specifically located on or beside Gethsemane (the cave)¹². Again, it would seem probable that the popular literature which located the tomb of Mary somewhere in the Kidron Valley influenced the later choice of site, which is specifically mentioned as being in the Valley of Jehoshaphat¹³ or Gethsemane¹⁴ in later editions of the legend.

There is no mention of a commemorative site for Mary in patristic literature or in pilgrim accounts until the sixth century, when Theodosius (De Situ x), the Piacenza Pilgrim (Itin. xvii) and the Breviarius (vii) mention the Church of St. Mary; the latter specifically refers to her tomb there. From this time onwards it became part of the Jerusalem pilgrimage circuit (cf. Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. xii, 1-5; Bernard the Monk, xiii; Commemoratorium x). St. John Damascene (Hom. xxi. 18) uses a source which states

that the church here existed during the days of the Bishop Juvenal (425-59). Eutychius of Alexandria (Annales i.536) in the tenth century, wrote that the church at Gethsemane containing the tomb of the Virgin was constructed during the reign of Theodosius I (379-395). The dates for Theodosius II (408-450) may be more suitable. Egeria and Jerome fail to mention the monument, and even the Armenian Lectionary of 417-439 omits any mention of it, so a date c.440 may be the earliest possible for the building's construction.

The only datable Byzantine remain in the present church on the site is a fifth century funerary inscription for a woman named Euphemia¹⁵. In 1937, trenches were sunk in the Armenian area west of the Tomb of the Virgin. Mosaic floors were uncovered along with an inscription reading "Tomb of Kasios and Adios", which is probably sixth century¹⁶. Walls in the north-west, north-east and south-west, along with the rock-cut walls in the south-east around the tomb inform us that the lower church was cruciform¹⁷ (see Figure 18). The Greeks have been digging in the region in recent years but their excavations have not been published.

The original church around the tomb survived until the Persian conquest of 614 when, according to Eutychius of Alexandria (Annales i.536), it was destroyed (see above, Chapter Nine).

In short, the literary evidence which "proves" the early veneration of a site where Mary was supposed to have been buried is of doubtful historical value. There is no archaeological material that would support the notion that Jewish-Christians venerated a tomb here. The shrine was constructed by isolating an early tomb from the rocky cliff in which it was found, in the same way that the Tomb of Christ was isolated. There were many tombs in this area that could have been chosen as the site of Mary's resting place. It seems probable that in order to satisfy the expectations of pilgrims who were familiar with the stories of the Virgin's burial in the Kidron Valley, some of which may have started to circulate before Nicea, a particular tomb came to be identified as that of Mary. A church was built over it in the middle to late fifth century. Here again it would appear that popular apocryphal stories influenced the development of a particular Christian holy site in the Byzantine period, and its origins are not to be found in ancient veneration.

CHAPTER TWELVE

NAZARETH

With Capernaum, Nazareth is one of the most extensive sites in which the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis has been used to interpret the archaeological evidence. According to Bagatti and Testa, Nazareth was a Jewish-Christian town until well into the fifth century. This theory has been devised by putting together various pieces of literary and archaeological data. It is necessary to address its numerous components separately, in order to determine if there is anything in Nazareth which can be construed as definitely coming from Jewish-Christians.

Following Bagatti's order in his publication of the excavations¹, the literature will be examined first, followed by the archaeological material.

Literature

Bagatti concludes, from a review of texts relating to Nazareth, that Jewish-Christians occupied the town. As he writes: "the literary texts ... are the basis for an understanding of the monuments"². Bagatti therefore analysed the archaeological evidence with firm ideas derived from his study of the literature. There is nothing necessarily wrong with this approach, if the

study of the literature is itself undertaken with care. Bagatti, however, uses a deductive method which first determines an hypothesis, and then looks for proof of this hypothesis in the literature. Again, if rigorous analysis is undertaken, this can provide valuable insights, but if it leads scholars to build one hypothesis upon another, and find proof of a theory on insubstantial evidence, it can also be misleading. The question to be asked in a re-examination of this literature is whether there is anything that has to be read as providing solid evidence of Jewish-Christians in the town.

The Gospels

From the evidence of the different nativity accounts in Matthew and Luke, Bagatti concludes that there were two separate edifices in Nazareth known to the evangelists: the "house of Mary" (cf. Luke 1:26-38, 56) and the "house of Joseph" (cf. Matt. 1:18-25). Bagatti's notion that the existence of first century memorial shrines gave rise to the discrepancies in this part of the nativity stories is a new one. Most commentators would accept that the accounts arose from two different churches with very different traditions concerning the birth of Jesus. If one community chose to emphasise Joseph's house, and another Mary's, this should not lead us a priori to conclude that there existed two venerated

holy places in the first century.

Bagatti proceeds to point out that Matthew speaks of the synagogue in Nazareth as "their synagogue" (Matt. 13:54 cf. "the synagogue" Mark 6:2, Luke 4:16). According to Bagatti:

the pronoun "their" in reference to the Jews shows that the Nazarenes believing in Christ could have had an opposition synagogue, that is that the separation of the two groups was already a fact.³

This is rather much to infer from one little pronoun.

Moreover, the precedent for referring to "their synagogues" is set by Mark. It is from here that Matthew derives his use of the pronoun. At the end of a pericope in which Jesus heals the sick (Mark 1:32-34), Jesus goes to a lonely place to pray, where Simon and others find him. Jesus then says: "Let us go to the next towns that I may preach there also ..." (Mark 1:38) and Mark duly reports: "And he went preaching in their synagogues, in the whole of Galilee (Mark 1:39). One must assume that "their" refers to the towns of Galilee. Luke (4:44) modifies Mark by putting, "And he was preaching in the synagogues of Judaea (or: of the Jews/of Galilee)" at this point, placing "And he taught in their synagogues" earlier in his narrative (Luke 4:15). Matthew is more or less faithful to Mark's text: "And he went about the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues" (Matt. 4:23) but he detaches this sentence from what preceded it in Mark, so that it is not clear to what "their" refers. Matthew later repeats the formula (9:35), this time

making clear that the reference is to the towns: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues ..." In the story of Jesus teaching in the synagogue, Matthew (13:54) adds the pronoun αὐτῶν to Mark's account (Mark 6:1-6a), although again it is not clear to whom he is referring. It appears to be those of the same verse who are astonished at his knowledge, but the people who heard him are mentioned specifically only in Mark (6:2). It looks as though Matthew has not transferred the subject of "their" from his source. At any rate, it seems clear that Matthew refers to the people of Nazareth in general rather than to a group of Jews in the town over against an enclave of Jewish-Christians.

Apocryphal Texts

Bagatti says that the Protevangelium of James, composed in the third century, was written "to promote the fortunes of Christian Judaism in Palestine,"⁴ in contrast to the usual view that the text shows such a nescience of Palestinian geography and Jewish customs that it can only have derived from a non-Jew who had never been to the country⁵. It is unclear what conclusions Bagatti wishes to draw from this work. The author places the Annunciation in Judaea, beside a well where Mary is drawing water. Bagatti considers this a Jewish-Christian tradition which was transferred

(returned?) to Nazareth at a later date.

Bagatti then proceeds to discuss the fourth century History of Joseph in which the death of Joseph is recounted. The complete edition is found in Arabic, derived from a Coptic text, the original of which is said by Bagatti to be "probably Jewish"⁶. Like the Protevangelium, the History of Joseph demonstrates an ignorance of Palestinian geography (it places Nazareth in Judaea, for example, within walking distance of the Temple). What Bagatti finds significant is that it has Joseph's corpse placed in a cave, closed by a door, in which were also the bodies of his ancestors (Extulerunt eum ad locum ubi sita erat spelunca et aperuerunt ianuam, et conderunt corpus eius inter corpora patrum eius⁷). Bagatti extrapolates from this that it was a "family tomb, cut in the rock and closed by a stone door", namely, "a burial chamber very like those we find in use in the 1st century"⁸. A description of a family burial cave, closed by some kind of a door, is not quite specific enough for us to make any such conclusion. M. R. James has pointed out that, far from this book being Jewish, it is Egyptian; fragments exist in Bohairic and Sahidic as well as the Arabic translation. Moreover, it has "highly Egyptian descriptions of death"⁹. Cave burial was quite common in Egypt. Bagatti, however, concludes that the evidence of the History of Joseph demonstrates that Jewish-Christian veneration of the

actual tomb of Joseph in Nazareth was possible. He points to the use of the "cosmic ladder" idea in the History of Joseph, to support his understanding that this was a Jewish-Christian work¹⁰, but Bagatti himself has outlined how the ladder to heaven was a motif used widely in the early Church, both in literature and art¹¹; it cannot therefore be used to argue for the text being specifically Jewish-Christian.

Relatives of Jesus

Bagatti believes that relatives of Jesus lived in Nazareth from the first century onwards, and that these were all Jewish-Christians. He mentions, from the New Testament writings, not only Mary but the four brothers - James, Joseph, Simeon and Jude - and sisters (Matt. 13:55-56, cf. 12:46) along with others like James and Joseph, sons of Mary (Matt. 27:56)¹², Cleophas (John 19:25), and James "of Alphaeus" (Matt. 10:3). Some of these were opposed to Jesus (cf. Matt. 12:46; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21; John 7:5) but Paul notes that certain "brothers of the Lord" were working for the Gospel (I Cor. 9:5, cf. Acts 1:14)¹³. Bagatti believes that the relatives of Jesus enjoyed a privileged position in the early Church (cf. Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.36.3), and it was for this reason that James became leader of the Jerusalem community (cf. Acts 15:13-22; 21:18-26; 1 Cor. 15:7; Gal. 2:9, 12), and thereafter Simeon, Jesus'

cousin, was given this role. This may well be true, but it is another thing again to assume that all Jesus' relatives believed in his messianic status.

Bagatti lays great emphasis on the letter to Aristides from Julius Africanus, quoted by Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. 1.7), in which it is stated that the relatives of Jesus went around the country expounding their genealogy. This genealogy was, according to Bagatti, an outline of their descent from David which would demonstrate "their right to preside over the churches"¹⁴. In fact, Julius Africanus does not say that these relatives of Jesus known to him were Christians, nor does he link their actions with the Church. He uses their methods of calculating their descent from David, mainly by means of recourse to levirate marriage, to explain the discrepancies between the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38). Having argued the case for the veracity of both Gospel genealogies, Africanus writes:

Indeed, this is not undemonstrated or written off-hand; at least, the relatives of the Saviour according to the flesh, either loving ostentation or simply teaching thoroughly, but at any rate telling the truth, handed on these things also.

Hist. Eccles. 1.7.11

The genealogy supplied by Africanus is Joseph's, and it is quite possible that relatives of Joseph used precisely what Africanus outlines to determine their descent from David, but whether the genealogy was worked out before Jesus' messianic claims were made, or after the

genealogies of Jesus were published in the Gospels and he was accepted as being a "son of David" by Christians, is a moot point. Africanus writes what reads as an apologetic on their behalf. Apparently, Herod burnt the records of all the noble families of the land, which were all stored in one convenient location, and this is why there were no "official" records of their connection with the Davidic line. Had Herod really committed such an act of arson, it is surprising that Josephus does not mention it. At any rate, the relatives of Jesus claimed that a few, like them, who were diligent, collected together scraps of the genealogy and preserved the genuine record of their descent. As Africanus tells it:

Ὀλίγοι δὲ τῶν ἐπιμελῶν ἰδιωτικὰς ἑαυτοῖς ἀπογραφὰς,
ἢ μνημονεύσαντες τῶν ὀνομάτων, ἢ ἄλλως ἔχοντες ἐξ
ἀντιγράφων, ἐναβρύνονται, σωζομένη τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς
εὐγενείας· ὧν ἐτύγχανον οἱ προειρημένοι 'δεσπόσυνοι'
καλούμενοι, διὰ τὴν πρὸς τὸ σωτήριον γένος συνάφειαν·
ἀπὸ τε Ναζάρων καὶ Κωχαβὰ κωμῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν τῇ
λοιπῇ γῇ ἐπιφοιτήσαντες, καὶ τὴν προκειμένην
γενεαλογίαν, ἐκ τε τῆς βιβλίου τῶν ἡμερῶν εἰς
ὅσον ἐξικνουῦντο, ἐξηγησάμενοι.

Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. 1.7.14

It is a common practice amongst translators of Eusebius to leave the term δεσπόσυνοι untranslated¹⁵, taking their cue from Rufinus' fifth-century translation into Latin, where the word is, mysteriously, left in Greek. The general consensus of opinion, however, is that the word means "belonging to the Lord"¹⁶, "belonging to a

lord/master"¹⁷, "The Master's People"¹⁸ or "kinsmen of the Lord". The master is understood to be Jesus since he is twice called δεσπότης in the New Testament (Jude 4 and 2 Pet. 2:1). Bardy even goes so far as to identify the relatives of Jesus as Jewish-Christians²⁰.

The word δεσπόσυνος can mean "belonging to a master", where there is a sense of possession, as in the case of a slave, for example; it is found in the neuter to specify the master's property (τὰ δεσπόσυνα χρηματα)²¹. However, it would be difficult to argue that Jesus actually possessed all his relatives; they cannot be counted as his "belongings". The word is never used in other cases in which a family "belonged to" a lordly ancestor. As consultation of the Concise Oxford Dictionary will show, the English word "belong" carries a variety of meanings. A person can "belong" as a possession (a slave), or as a member of some group or clan. It would seem that the proprietary sense of the Greek has not been fully realised by those who have read the definition "belonging to a master", and the latter English sense has been understood, when the Greek does not permit it.

There is, moreover, a perfectly reasonable alternative understanding of δεσπόσυνος: that it was simply another way of saying δεσπότης²². This meaning is rare, which may account for Rufinus's hesitation in translating the curious word, but nevertheless is attested from the seventh century B.C.

until the sixth century A.D.²³. Perhaps the best confirmation that this was Africanus' understanding of the word comes from the earliest translation of Eusebius' text, which is almost universally ignored: the Syriac version of A.D. 462, now in Leningrad²⁴. The Syriac text²⁵ has the word ܟܕܐܝܢ, an honorific title used to address lords and masters, sometimes found with a possessive ending (ܟܕܐܝܢܐ: "his lordship")²⁶. On balance, it seems the fifth-century Syriac translators of Eusebius understood the text better than more recent scholars. One should note that Africanus says that the relatives of Jesus were called δεσπόδυνοι, as if this was a form of address. A translation of δεσπόδυνοι as "lords" would, moreover, fit with the context; the relatives of Jesus were boasting of their descent from David, not of their relationship with Christ. The passage may then be translated:

However, a few of the careful ones, who had personal records of their own, either having a recollection of the names or otherwise getting them from copies, are vain about²⁷ the memory of noble descent; ^{being preserved} among these were the aforementioned²⁸ called "lords" because of their connection with the line²⁹ of the Saviour). From the Jewish villages of Nazareth and Kochaba they went around the rest of the country and, so far as they were able, they narrated the above-mentioned genealogy, and (the one) from the Book of Days.

Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. 1.7.14

It would seem likely that they travelled around the country reciting their Davidic genealogy not because they

wished to claim authority over the churches, which are not mentioned, but because they vainly (in both senses of the word) wanted to be considered aristocrats in Israel; truly this was a high-minded aspiration for a group of lowly villagers from Galilee.

The genealogy is traced from Joseph, and therefore it might be asked whether the relatives of Jesus display "Ebionite" ideas in their belief that Jesus was descended from Joseph rather than, physically, only from Mary³⁰. However, it should be remembered that the canonical Gospels also trace Jesus' physical descent from Joseph, not Mary. Luke has "Jesus...being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph" (3:23), and then lists Joseph's descent from David, and Adam. Matthew has the genealogy down from David, to "Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom Jesus was born" (1:16). Moreover, a multitude of early versions have for Matt. 1:16: "... Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the virgin, begot Jesus who is called Christ,"³¹. Hegesippus and Africanus both indicate that it was the physical brothers of Jesus, sons of Joseph, who were descended from David. The development of orthodox theology would later find this a problem. The idea of Mary's descent from David is first found in the aforementioned third-century Protevangelium of James. There is in the second century nothing necessarily "Ebionite" about the tracing of Jesus' descent from Joseph: it was an early belief of the Church which was soon discarded. Bagatti suggests that the later evidence

of two Davidic genealogies, one from Joseph and one from Mary, shows that "two different branches in Nazareth had preserved their own house and their own records"³², again tying legend down to physical edifices.

It would be reckless to suggest that all Jesus' relatives were, during the first century, Christians. The Gospel evidence which sees Jesus' relatives as being hostile to his mission undoubtedly reflects a situation in which some of them were against him. John makes a pointed reference to the unbelief of Jesus' brothers (John 7:5). Luke has Jesus almost cast over a cliff for claiming to be the Messiah after preaching in the synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30 cf. Mark 6:1-6; Matt. 13:53-58). The Synoptic Gospels preserve a pericope which is at best ambiguous, and which would seem to imply that Jesus spurned his unbelieving family in favour of his true family, namely those that believed in him (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 7:19-21).

Bagatti's theory that the grandchildren of Jesus' brother Jude who, according to Hegesippus, were arrested during the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81-96) as being descendants of David (Hist. Eccles. iii.20.1-5), were bishops of Nazareth and Kochaba respectively seems to push the evidence. The Roman authorities were apparently worried about people who claimed Davidic descent (possible Messianic pretenders) and their capacity to raise an army of rebellion. The line of questioning

concerns their financial resources, their property and their concept of a Messiah and his Kingdom. It was determined that they owned only thirty-nine plethra (about 25 acres) of land on which they paid taxes, farming it by their own labour, and that they possessed 9000 denarii between them, which was the value of the land. Their understanding of a future Messiah was eschatological and heavenly, and nothing is said of Jesus. Their interrogator, called "Domitian Caesar" for the purpose of the story, then dismisses the pair as being contemptuously lower class. Hegesippus adds that upon their release they "came and presided over every church" as witnesses and members of the Lord's family, and lived on until the time of Trajan (Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.32.6; cf. iii.20.6). The language may be formulaic, a way of according the grand-nephews of Jesus a nebulous authority, but it does not make them actual bishops. Jude himself is traditionally considered a Christian, and the letter of Jude in the New Testament is traditionally thought to have been written by him. Certainly, there is some reason to consider that his grandsons believed in Jesus as Messiah, since Eusebius considers their interrogation to be an instance of the early persecution of the Church (Hist. Eccles. iii.20.5), but the historicity of the tale is doubtful. Not only does it employ the Emperor Domitian as a protagonist, which seems to be poetic licence, but the names of the two men are not remembered. One might ask to what extent

they could have been significant church leaders if their names were soon forgotten. Furthermore, a century had elapsed between the time this event took place and the date when Hegesippus began to record the history of the Church; quite enough time for legendary elements to creep into the story³³.

Nazareth and Kochaba

The two towns in Galilee from which the relatives of Jesus came, Nazareth and Kochaba, are generally described as being "Jewish", not as "Ebionite" or Christian. Kochaba, co-incidentally, is the name of a town in Syria which was identified as being occupied by Ebionites of the fourth century. Epiphanius states that the sect of the Nazoraeans existed in κωκάβα, χωχάβα in "Hebrew" (Pan. xxix:7:7 cf. xxx:2:8-9 and κωκάβα xxx:18:1), which was located in Basanitis, near other towns called Karnaim (map ref. 247250) and Ashtaroth (245246). Eusebius speaks of a place called χωβά, connected with the "Ebionites"; he may mean the same town (Onom. 172:1-3 cf. Jerome Lib. loc. 112) for he says it is in the same region as another place of the same name "to the left of Damascus". Epiphanius' version of how Kochaba is said in Hebrew furnishes Eusebius with some excuse for transcribing it as Choba, for the names would have been pronounced very similarly. There is no reason to connect the village(s) with the Galilean κωχάβα mentioned by

Africanus. It was a common name. Kochaba translates Aramaic or Syriac for "star" or "planet" כּוֹכְבָּא and כּוֹכְבָּא respectively. R. Dositai was born in a Galilean town named Kaukaba (Pesiktha rabbathi 16), but, as A. Neubauer pointed out, "on ne saurait dire quel Kaukaba le Talmud veut entendre"³⁴. The Arabic term for the Crusader fortress of Belvoir, Kawkab al-Hawa' (199223) probably preserves an earlier Aramaic term (despite Dalman's doubtful identification of the site as being Agrippina/Gerupina³⁵. M. Avi-Yonah identified a "Cochaba" in central Galilee (173248) and another 27 km east of the Sea of Galilee (237248), which he considers to be the Ebionite town of Epiphanius³⁶. Nearby, 15 km south-west of Damascus near the hill of Mâr Boulos (Saint Paul), there is another Kaukab, in which there are a few remains of a pre-Christian temple on the hill; it later became known as the place where Paul was converted³⁷. Bagatti's understanding that the central Galilean Kochaba was occupied by Jewish-Christians³⁸ is not found in any literary evidence and would require us to conflate separate traditions, without justification. Bagatti thinks the name itself was invented by the Jewish-Christians, asserting that the "star" is related to the "prophetic star" of Matthew's nativity account³⁹. A better suggestion may be that the name derived from the star-god mentioned by the prophet Amos (5:26)⁴⁰. The feminine form of the name in Syriac indicates Venus, the

planet.

The demography of Galilee as a whole has already been discussed in Chapter Three, in which it was argued that minim did not refer to Jewish-Christians (pace Bagatti) and that central Galilee was almost entirely Jewish in character in the second and third centuries, apart from a pagan (Roman) authoritarian presence in Sepphoris/ Diocaesarea and Tiberias. The story told by Julius Africanus concerning the relatives of Jesus should not be used as proof of Jewish-Christians in Galilee. The story of the grandsons of Jude suggests that there may have been some Jewish-Christians living in Nazareth at the end of the first century, but it is the last evidence we have for possible Jewish-Christians there. It was suggested in Chapter One that after the edict by Nerva in A.D. 96 ethnic Jews and religious Jews were distinguished. There is indeed a lacuna in historical information regarding the fate of the early communities of Jewish-Christians in Galilee reported in Acts. Perhaps, as was suggested above, with the shift of the centre of Jewish religious life from the environs of Jerusalem and the coastal plain to Galilee after the Bar Kochba war, those who wished to be part of the Church gradually emigrated from the Jewish heartland, and went to Caesarea, Antioch, Damascus or beyond.

Bagatti considers the silence of Christian sources concerning Jewish-Christians in Galilee as speaking volumes. The reason the hypothetical shrines of Nazareth

were not mentioned by Christians until the sixth century, he says, was because they were in the hands of Jewish-Christians⁴¹ whom everyone wished to ignore. Not only is this statement inaccurate, for Nazareth is mentioned as having a Christian shrine as early as the fourth century (see below), but also Bagatti fails to notice that the early Church writers did not exhibit a tendency to remain silent about groups that offended them; quite the opposite.

Bagatti is careful to note that Africanus explicitly states that Nazareth and Kochaba are "Jewish towns" (Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. 1.7.14), though of course Bagatti considers this evidence of there being Jewish-Christians in these places. The Jewishness of Nazareth, up until the end of the Byzantine period in Palestine, is confirmed by all other existing literary evidence. The sixth-century Qohelet Rabba (2:8) refers to Nazareth as a "village of priests". A list of priestly courses found in Caesarea, dated to the third or fourth centuries, mentions Nazareth as one of the places where priestly families lived⁴². Preserving the tradition, the priestly family Hapizzez (I Chron. 24:15) is recorded as living there in a liturgical poem from the ninth century composed by Eleazar ha-Kalir⁴³. It would be odd for Nazareth to be known as a priestly village if it was populated by Jewish-Christians. There is no mention of meshumadim, minim or Noṣ^ᵛrim in Nazareth in any Jewish

literature. Epiphanius refers to Nazareth as a place where no gentiles lived, whether "Hellenes" (pagans), Samaritans or Christians (Pan. xxx.11.10). Against all this evidence, the argument for a Jewish-Christian occupation of the town seems very flimsy.

Byzantine Nazareth in Literary Sources

Eusebius mentions Nazareth in his Onomasticon (138.24-140.2) but notes nothing of interest about the place, only that Christ was given the name "Nazarene" because of his coming from here, and that members of the Church were "once Nazarenes but now Christians". Bagatti's conclusion that this implies a distinction between the Jewish-Christian "Nazarenes" and the Nazarenes of the ancient Church is strained. The Bordeaux Pilgrim bypassed Nazareth, which certainly does suggest that there was nothing to be visited in the town. It was argued above that pilgrims were not just tourists, or persons undertaking travel for the purposes of ἱερωπία, but that Christian pilgrims went to specific places in order to pray. If there was nowhere for them to pray, then there was not a strong incentive for them to visit the place. In A.D.373, Melania the Elder hastened to bring alms to Christians who had been exiled from Egypt to Sepphoris, but did not visit Nazareth, which tends to suggest there were few Christians there to sustain⁴⁴. The first person to mention that a Christian

shrine existed in Nazareth was Egeria, in 383. Her words, recorded in the text of Peter the Deacon, describe a garden, a cave and an altar: "In Nazareth is a garden in which the Lord used to be after his return from Egypt" (Pet. Diac. Lib. P4) and, "there is a big and very splendid cave in which she (that is, Holy Mary) lived. An altar has been placed there" (Pet. Diac. Lib. T)⁴⁵. One may wonder, at this stage, if there was not some small structure connected with the cave; a consideration that should be borne in mind when considering the archaeological evidence. Who might have constructed this Christian shrine?

As has been mentioned above, Epiphanius' Panarion, written c.375-7, gives us an account of the labours of Joseph of Tiberias, a Jew who converted to Christianity, in which it is stated that he received permission from the Emperor Constantine to build churches in Jewish strongholds such as Nazareth (Pan. xxx.11.10). Epiphanius proceeds to describe his efforts in Tiberias, where he succeeded in building a little church in part of the ruined Hadrianeum (Pan. xxx.12). Moreover, "in Diocaesarea and also in each of the others he completed buildings" (Pan. xxx. 12.9)⁴⁶. Joseph succeeded, therefore, in building a structure in Nazareth. Indeed, it would be hard to imagine why Epiphanius would have specifically mentioned the town if Joseph had not built something there. The date of his receiving permission from Constantine must of course have been before 22 May

337, when the emperor died, but it cannot have been long before. Joseph should probably be connected with the young Patriarch Hillel II (patriarch from c.330-365), so one might suggest c.336 A.D. as a date of church construction in Nazareth. These tentative conclusions will have to be tested against the archaeological evidence in due course.

Jerome does not write of what existed in Nazareth (cf. Lib. loc. 143; Com. Matt. ii.23), but since he records that Paula visited the town during her pilgrimage, he provides us with some evidence that there was a place, however insubstantial the shrine, where Paula could pray (Ep. cviii.13.5). Theodosius, at the beginning of the sixth century, mentions Nazareth in a list of distances useful for pilgrims (De situ iv). All this shows that Nazareth was visited by pilgrims, even if what was there was not deemed particularly worthy of comment.

However, one might ask why it was that the Jewish population of Nazareth did not tear down the Christian shrine the moment Joseph left the town. It would appear that he went in and built it without any real concern to missionise. Perhaps this was the very reason he was successful. With some kind of small shrine or church in Nazareth, with perhaps a few caretakers in residence, the Jews would have felt no serious threat. Christian pilgrims, like Egeria and Paula, would have started to

come to the town, bringing with them important revenue. E.D. Hunt has explored how the pilgrims' yearning for relics and mementoes could be readily exploited for commercial gain⁴⁷. Pilgrims could be pandered to for the sake of their appreciative "tourist dollar". This is made amply clear by the report given by the gullible Piacenza Pilgrim of A.D.570:

We travelled on to the city of Nazareth, where many miracles take place. In the synagogue there is kept the book in which the Lord wrote his ABC, and in this synagogue there is the bench on which he sat with the other children. Christians can lift the bench and move it about, but the Jews are completely unable to move it, and cannot drag it outside. The house of St. Mary is now a basilica, and her clothes are the cause of frequent miracles.

The Jewesses of that city are better-looking than any other Jewesses in the whole country. They declare that this is Saint Mary's gift to them, for they also say that she was a relation of theirs. Though there is no love lost between Jews and Christians, these women are full of kindness.

Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. v⁴⁸

One can well imagine the mirth of the Jews who yet again demonstrated to the visiting Christians that they could not lift the bench in their synagogue⁴⁹. One can also imagine a bevy of the most beautiful girls in the village idling outside the basilica in order to do kind things for the visitors. "The donation of funds for pious ends", as Hunt puts it⁵⁰ was a source of revenue and could be encouraged.

The Piacenza Pilgrim's account seems to imply strongly that the town's population was still Jewish in the sixth century. From him, we also learn that the

small structure built by Joseph of Tiberias had been superseded by a basilica. In 614, however, the Persians invaded Palestine from the north. The Jews of Nazareth apparently joined Chosroes II in destroying churches and murdering Christians in Jerusalem⁵¹. In revenge, the Emperor Heraclius reluctantly singled out Nazareth for special punishment⁵². Kopp has argued that the fact that the men of Nazareth went to fight with the Persians shows that there was no significant Christian presence in the town they needed to worry about in regard to the safety of their wives and children⁵³.

At the end of the century, Arculf, whose impressions were recorded by Adomnan, speaks of two large churches; there is no mention of a Jewish population or a synagogue (De Loc. Sanct. 11.26). Peter the Deacon (Lib. T) and the thirteenth century pilgrim Burchard⁵⁴ mention that the synagogue was converted into a church. Again these pieces of literary evidence should be borne in mind when we come to look at the archaeology of Roman and Byzantine Nazareth.

To conclude this survey of literary material, it suffices to say that there is nothing that can be found which definitively points to Jewish-Christian presence in the town past the first century A.D. The town was clearly Jewish until the seventh century; whether some of these Jews became Christians is not said. There is no evidence which would require us to approach the

archaeology with any expectation of uncovering Jewish-Christian remains in Nazareth.

Archaeology⁵⁵

In 1892, Benedict Vlaminck, a Franciscan monk, discovered Byzantine remains in the Franciscan property in Nazareth⁵⁶. The remains were studied by Prosper Viaud, who undertook further excavations⁵⁷. After demolishing the eighteenth-century church which commemorated the Annunciation, the Franciscans began renewed excavations, which were undertaken under the supervision of Bagatti in 1955⁵⁸. Further sporadic excavations continued until 1966, during which time a new church, the Basilica of the Annunciation, was built over most of the archaeological remains, partially incorporating and partially obliterating them. The Basilica was dedicated in 1968 and is a major tourist attraction. Nearby is the Church of St. Joseph, also belonging to the Franciscans, under which archaeological investigations were conducted during the 1930s by Father Viaud.

Bagatti begins his examination of the archaeology of the region around the so-called Shrine, or Grotto, of the Annunciation by examining the rock-cut features which stretch over an area covering 75 x 85 m., and possibly beyond (see Figure 19 and Photo 8). These are: Middle Bronze tombs⁵⁹, silos from the Iron Age⁶⁰ onwards, a

wine-press installation¹, an olive-pressing installation², holes for holding storage jars and bell-shaped cisterns. There are also uniform depressions which indicate where the foundations of walls were laid. One can add that under the site now occupied by the Sisters of Nazareth, 100 m. west of the present Basilica of the Annunciation and under the Church of St. Joseph, to the north, there are caves containing cisterns from the Roman period³. The remains indicate that the entire area was used for agricultural processing activity during the Roman period. Domestic buildings may have been constructed over the complexes. The remains bring to mind the words of the Piacenza Pilgrim, who stated that Nazareth's grain, wine, oil and apples were of superior quality (Itin. v).

A large number of Roman and Byzantine tombs found mainly on the hill west of the basilica, and some on the hill to the east, have been examined by C. Kopp⁴. Further tombs have been found in Nazareth Illit (181233)⁵, Ya'ad (17352533)⁶ and in the property of the Sisters of Nazareth⁷. Nearly all of the Roman and Byzantine tombs appear to be Jewish, along with a first-century Aramaic funerary inscription⁸. A Roman period sarcophagus was discovered east of the basilica⁹, but no ossuaries have been found. Bagatti considers that Tomb 79¹⁰, which contains much indecipherable graffiti and scratched figurative drawings, was utilised by Jewish-Christians on the basis of his reading of a few Greek

letters as misspelt $\phi\omega\varsigma$, "light", since he associates the word solely with Jewish-Christians. Bagatti's phi, however, is clearly an unintentional scratch through the mouth of a representation of a human head (see Figure 20). There are two such heads reproduced by Bagatti⁷¹. On the face of the first he reads an upsilon, when it seems plain from the photograph that the lines represent tears. The second head, on which Bagatti saw $\phi\theta\sigma$, has the letters: $\wedge\nabla\theta\zeta$. It would appear that Bagatti misread the final letter as the old form of sigma, Σ . The delta is upside down, which may indicate that it is musical notation. Further reason to suppose this is suggested by the form of the heads, which are depicted as having open mouths as if to show people singing or wailing. There is no reason to consider these as being scratched by Jewish-Christians, though there may be a magical significance in the employment of these designs.

A Greek funerary inscription is dated by Bagatti on palaeographical grounds to the third century, although his palaeographical assumptions, that an enlarged M and round O must require this, are not quite correct. In the first place, the M is not enlarged. It is more significant that it is curvilinear, of a form which is characteristic of the letter in the fifth century⁷². In the second place, a round, as opposed to an oval O is not a feature that provides a precise date in epigraphy. It is found in inscriptions from Gerasa from the first to

third centuries, and from the fifth to sixth centuries⁷³.

The Grotto of the Annunciation (no. 31) was originally part of the wine-press complex (no. 34: the "Kitchen of the Virgin"), to which it was connected by a tunnel⁷⁴. The matter to be determined is when this cave was singled out and converted into a Christian holy place: before or after Constantine or, more specifically, Joseph of Tiberias. Bagatti believes that in the third century, at the initiative of Jewish-Christians, a synagogue-church was constructed over and around the cave. The grotto itself he considers to have been venerated from the very beginning, suggesting then that it really was the actual place where the Annunciation took place.

Bagatti was able to establish that a basilical Byzantine church with a nave and two aisles, an atrium, along with an attached monastery, existed adjacent to the Shrine of the Annunciation (see Figure 19). A number of walls remain, and some fine mosaics. The northern aisle was cut into by steps leading down to a cave complex constituted by the Chapel of the Angel, the small cave no. 29 (now known as the Martyrium), and the Shrine of the Annunciation. The nave was lower than the southern aisle and the monastery floors. In the walls of the church are blocks of stone in secondary use. The complex of buildings measured 48 m. in length and 27 m. in width, and was oriented to the east⁷⁵.

It is important to establish the dating of this

church with some accuracy because under the mosaic of the central nave, in a rock-cut basin, and under the floor of the monastery, fragments of an earlier Christian building came to light; it is this that Bagatti believes to be a Jewish-Christian synagogue-church.

As it was shown in the examination of literary material, the first evidence for the existence of a basilica comes from the Piacenza Pilgrim in A.D.570, but how long before this was the basilica in existence? Our examination will proceed to analyse all the pertinent archaeological evidence, in order to reach a conclusion. The nature of this earlier building will also be discussed so that it can be established whether or not it was used by Jewish-Christians.

Mosaics

Nine mosaics have been discovered to have decorated the Byzantine basilica, cave complex and monastery (see Figure 21). The mosaics of the Chapel of the Angel (the "Conon mosaic", no.2, see Photo 9), monastery and southern aisle (nos. 4-9) would stylistically all correspond to a fifth to seventh century date. However, the mosaics of cave no. 29 and the central nave appear to be the most ancient.

The mosaic (no.1, see Photo 10) located in the nave is oriented to the north toward the steps leading into the cave complex, but the basilica is, like other

Byzantine churches, oriented east. The main decoration of the mosaic is contained within a border of black tesserae three pieces wide. The northern part of this band is lost, so that we do not know how closely it approached the beginning of the steps. The preserved part of the band was 89 cm. broad and 1.69 m. long; this has been extended slightly by restoration. Inside it are three separate areas of design. In its northernmost region there was a pattern only partly preserved at the time of its discovery⁷⁶. In the restored mosaic now on show in the Basilica of the Annunciation, no attempt has been made to reconstruct this pattern; the missing portions have been filled in with plain white tesserae, so that it appears to the modern visitor a rather strange shape⁷⁷. Since the mosaic is roughly geometrical and over a quarter of the pattern has been preserved, it can be reconstructed to some extent by means of mirror-imaging the existing motif. As a result of this, an oval table with a chi cross can be distinguished (see Figure 22).

Moving south, there is then a rectangular frame of solid black triangles and a single line of black tesserae, which enclose a monogram of an Greek cross and rho within a wreath composed of red and black tesserae on a white background; around this are four chi crosses. Next, there is another simple frame containing a two small crosses with connective lines of black tesserae and small oblong shapes⁷⁸. Beyond this main design within

the bold border, is a region of white tesserae with randomly spaced crosses and diamond shapes, which stretches for a further 4 m. In this area the tesserae are larger than in the main design: 6 per 10 cm. as opposed to 7.6 per 10 cm. It is well-known, as a generalisation, that mosaic tesserae increased in size during the course of the Byzantine period, apart from the tesserae used in high-quality mosaics such as the nilotic mosaic of et-Tabgha or the upper mosaic (no.5) of the southern aisle here, where the cubes are much the smallest in the church (12 per 10 cm.)⁷⁹. Bagatti is therefore justified in wondering if this portion of the mosaic was added after the main design⁸⁰ even though no clear demarcation line is found. After all, a clever mosaicist would have ensured that a new portion would blend in with the old without an ugly line. There is no definitive boundary to this mosaic area. In its final form, it may have covered a large part of the western side of the central nave. Its orientation to the east is curious, as Bagatti rightly notes⁸¹ and would make better sense in a structure oriented toward the grotto, rather than to the east.

The date of this mosaic is difficult to determine. The use of crosses on floor mosaics is uncommon, but not exceptional. An edict of Theodosius II (Cod. Just. i.8.1) dated A.D.427 forbade the use of the cross motif in floor mosaics. One could at first sight assume, therefore, that both the mosaic and its extension were

created before this date. However, crosses in floor mosaics have been found in various places in Palestine, and not all of these are to be dated before the edict.

It should be noted at the outset that the mosaic (no. 3, see Photo 11) in the small cave (no.29), adjacent to the Chapel of the Angel, is very similar in style to mosaic no. 1. There is a black border three tesserae wide, measuring 1.07 m. square (though it is slightly irregular). It too contains the same cross-rho monogram. It has a square "chessboard" design at the centre, with two diamonds on either side, and the same connective lines, but it is done with blue tesserae on a white background. The tesserae measure 7.3 per 10 cm.²². The mosaic is oriented north, towards what may have been an altar or tomb (for which, see below)²³.

The Chapel of the Angel is paved with the so-called "Conon" mosaic (mosaic no. 2, Photo 9), which has crosses within squares and a geometric design incorporating lozenges in squared areas. It contains an inscription which reads "From²⁴ Conon, Deacon of Jerusalem". While it also has crosses, the tesserae are larger than those of mosaics 1a and 3, measuring 6.5 per 10 cm. Stylistically, the Conon mosaic does not appear to derive from the same mosaicist. It uses three colours: blue, red and white, and has a similarity to the fifth-century "loaves and fishes" mosaic at et-Tabgha, which has lozenges within squares and crossed lines as well as small crosses on the

loaves, also to mosaics nos. 6 and 7 in the sacristy of the Nazareth basilica and the north-east nave mosaic at Shavei Zion²⁵. A mosaic border of three tesserae in width runs along the base of the western walls of the Chapel of the Angel, which are not natural rock but built of hewn stones. This border and the walls themselves are older than the Conon mosaic²⁶. No prior mosaic pavement was discovered underneath when the Conon mosaic was removed, so it seems that originally this was an unadorned vestibule between cave no.29 and the venerated grotto no.31, which was paved over only later, when the basilica was constructed.

Other cross designs are found on mosaic floors throughout Palestine. At Beth Sahur, in the rock-cut chapel at Shepherds' Field, there is a fourth-century mosaic with red crosses on a white background²⁷. In Evron, near Nahariya, in the original basilical church dated by an inscription containing a wreathed cross-rho to 415. There are cross-rho monograms at the entrance to the nave, in the eastern aisle of the atrium, and in two rooms north of the apse. Crosses are used in the pavement seven times in all²⁸. Near there at Shavei Zion, there are several mosaic crosses in the first church including a wreathed cross. The church is late fourth to early fifth century²⁹. Avi-Yonah thinks the mosaics come from the beginning of the fifth century³⁰. At Beth ha-Shitta, west of Beth Shean, in a small Byzantine monastery farm, there are two small rooms paved in mosaics of three

colours. In the first room is a red cross in a circle, with four small crosses in the corners; in the second room is a pavement with a field of 70 squares filled with geometric designs, fruit, and Greek letters. Avi-Yonah considers that the style of the mosaic is degenerate and the mosaic rough, which he thinks points to a late date, possibly even to the eighth century when the Byzantine edicts were no longer operative in Palestine³¹. but Y. Aharoni, who excavated the complex, dated it to the fifth or sixth centuries³². A cross-rho monogram was found in a mosaic floor of Beth Hanan, south of Jaffa, in an inscription which dated it to the thirty-first year of the "emperor", which refers to either Justinian I³³, or, as Bagatti has suggested, Theodosius II³⁴, who reigned 38 and 42 years respectively. In the former case the monogram should be dated to 558, and in the latter to 439. Both dates are after the edict of Theodosius. A Latin cross, among others, found in the mosaic of the fifth century Church of St. Kyriakos, excavated in Kibbutz Magen in the Negev, demonstrates that the use of the cross in floor mosaics was used right up until the date of the edict, and possibly a little past it³⁵. A Latin cross existed in Nazareth's mosaic no.4, located in the south aisle³⁶. At Kursi, two levels of mosaics were found in the chapel, each with several crosses. The second mosaic would have been laid very close to the time of Theodosius' edict, and possibly after; the monastery

itself dates from the fifth century⁹⁷. In Gerasa, the sixth century church of Procopius has a cross in the middle of a mosaic⁹⁸ and in the Church of St. John the Baptist, also from the sixth century, crosses are found in the border⁹⁹.

Bagatti himself notes that in Syria, the monogram cross is found on mosaics until the sixth century, while in Rome his study of the dated mosaics show it to have been used only until 425¹⁰⁰. This is an interesting case to consider in any discussion about the efficacy of imperial edicts. Archaeological material tends to show that crosses on mosaic floors in Syria and Palestine cannot be dated prior to 427 simply because the edict was issued in this year. Some crosses were clearly much later than this date, others were very close to it and some were probably long before. Dating of floor mosaics with crosses must rest on other evidence.

From a preliminary examination, however, there appear to be three stages of mosaic decoration in the church. Firstly, the cross-rho mosaics (nos. 1a and 3) were created. It is tempting to suggest that there may have been a third similar mosaic in the actual Grotto of the Annunciation itself. There is no mosaic in this cave because part of the floor was lowered in 1730 when a new church was constructed on the site¹⁰¹. Vlaminck discovered mosaic tesserae at the Gabriel Altar in the Shrine¹⁰² and in the apse on its east side¹⁰³, but these have disappeared¹⁰⁴. Secondly, the mosaics of the

basilica, the monastery and the Chapel of the Angel (the Conon mosaic) were created. All these have tesserae of about the same size and show a stylistic similarity. Thirdly, a high-quality mosaic (no.5) was laid over mosaic no.4.

Bagatti's statement that there is "nothing to prevent" the second phase of mosaics going back to a period prior to 427 is insubstantial in the light of the evidence. There is nothing to prevent the mosaics from dating considerably after 427. Since the other wreathed cross-rho design in Galilee, at Evron, is dated to 415, one may on the basis of this parallel date the earliest Nazareth mosaic pavements (nos.1a and 3) to the beginning of the fifth century. If we are to assign them to an earlier period, then other evidence must be brought to bear upon the matter.

Excursus: The Mosaic of Conon

The Conon mosaic (no.2) is linked by Bagatti to a legendary martyr named Conon, who apparently came from Nazareth and was a relative of Christ¹⁰⁵, because of the inscription naming a deacon of the same name from Jerusalem. The legendary Conon, is attested in tenth-century sources as having been killed during the reign of Decius (249-51) at Magydos in Pamphilia¹⁰⁶. Bagatti thinks that the deacon Conon wished to adorn the shrine out of love for his namesake¹⁰⁷. There is no way of proving this one way or another, but one might wonder

whether in this instance the pilgrimage site really|did contribute to the formation of later legend. The tradition of the relatives of Jesus living in Nazareth (Africanus), the story of the grand-nephews of Christ renounced as witnesses, μάργουρες, under Domitian (Hegesippus) and the inscription of the mosaic of Conon, were all amalgamated into a legend. Late Byzantine pilgrims from Asia Minor used the three components and arrived at a legend of a relative of Jesus, Conon, who was martyred under Decius in Pamphilia.

Walls

From a close study of the masonry, Bagatti was able to determine that the stylobate between the nave and the southern aisle of the basilica belonged to an older building¹⁰⁸ along with a stone indicating a corner just before the apse (Figure 19). A piece of wall under mosaic no. 7 in the sacristy is aligned with these walls and would appear to be part of the same structure¹⁰⁹. Corbo, who has recently re-examined the remains of the so-called synagogue-church in Nazareth, ignores this wall, but includes as part of the early structure a wall (m) on the exterior of the Grotto of the Annunciation¹¹⁰, the walls which form the sides of the Chapel of the Angel and the rock-cut steps to its south and west¹¹¹. A number of stones in secondary use were found in the walls of the basilica and underneath the mosaics. Some of

these had coats of white or coloured plaster, on a few of which there were graffiti which will be discussed below.

The Basin under the Nave

When mosaic 1 was lifted, it was discovered that it rested on rock in its northern part, but that part of its southern section covered a rock-cut basin which aligns neither with the basilica, nor with the previous building, nor with the way to the cave complex dictated by the north-facing mosaic design 1a. Bagatti believes on the basis of Testa's interpretation of graffiti scratched on to the plaster of this basin¹¹² that it was used for "Jewish-Christian" initiation baths. Bagatti compares it with a similar basin found in the Church of St. Joseph, which is interpreted as a baptismal pool¹¹³. These two basins will be considered together in order to establish whether they were components of any previous Jewish-Christian cult places.

The basin (Figure 19, no.12 and see Figure 23) under mosaic 1b measures 1.95 m. x 2 m. and is entered by a flight of five rock-cut steps on the southern side. The basin (2 m. deep) and the steps are coated with lime plaster. In the northeast corner there is a further basin (70 x 60 cm) with a smaller one inside¹¹⁴, and on the northern wall there is a recess (d) measuring 63 x 61 cm. On the north and west walls graffiti have been incised into the plaster whilst it was still wet¹¹⁵. The fill of

this basin will be discussed below; however, it should be noted that an oxidised curved knife of a type used for grape harvesting, as Bagatti himself notes¹¹⁶, was discovered in the recess.

From personal observation of the graffiti on the walls of the basin, it was determined that the scratchings were all at the height of a small child, less than one metre from the floor. Testa identified roughly-drawn boats, crosses, a "cosmic ladder", plants and letters which he connected with Jewish-Christians, mainly by recourse to Gnostic texts. Those of us familiar with the artistic work of small children might readily arrive at quite another interpretation (see Figure 24). There are no Christian signs or Greek letters that are remotely definite. None of the supposed boats are drawn with the care typical of other such representations in Palestine (cf. those in Beth Shearim¹¹⁷), but rather with a technique one can only describe as extremely loose; in fact, it is not at all certain whether these are boats at all. The networks of very roughly drawn criss-crossing lines may indicate fishing nets, and it is just possible to imagine a scene of fishing boats and drying nets near trees, but even this requires some imagination. It simply does not seem possible that these scratchings are intended as symbols of any kind. Moreover, if the basin was to be filled with water this would obscure the graffiti; it is hard to understand why anyone would draw these to adorn an unseen place. Bagatti thinks that the

workman himself made the scratchings, but a skilled workman who has put considerable time and energy into smoothing over the plaster coating the walls would hardly go down on his knees to make these scribblings with such a wild hand.

The rock-cut and partly built basin underneath the Church of St. Joseph (Figure 25, Photo 12) measures 2.05 x 2.20 m. and is 2 m. deep. It is entered by a flight of seven steps. Both the floor, the steps and part of the surrounding area were covered with mosaic, of which most still remains. The mosaic has a design of black rectangles on a white background. The sides of the basin are plastered. Sherds fixed into this plaster were identified by Bagatti as Byzantine¹¹⁸, but he also notes that they could just as easily be late Roman¹¹⁹. There is a small basin in the north-west corner, a narrow channel between the steps and the main part of the floor and a basalt block inserted into the floor east of the basin¹²⁰. Testa has interpreted the seven steps as being representative of the ascending and descending of Jesus to and from Heaven, the channel as the River Jordan, the basalt stone as Christ and the mosaic rectangles as angels¹²¹.

Jewish-Christians were undoubtedly baptised, just as other Christians, though one might expect them to retain the same attitude to their baptismal baths as they had to the Jewish purificatory baths, or mikvehs. Jews never

paved mikvehs with mosaics, since the cracks in between the tesserae might harbour impurities¹²². However, it was quite common for the collecting vats used in wine-making to be provided with mosaic floors.

Wine-pressing complexes in Palestine consisted of a treading area, which was a square or rectangular slightly sloping floor, and a collecting vat connected to it either by an open channel or a closed pipe. In between, there was often a settling vat or a straining depression¹²³. In Galilee the intermediary pit was small. In my correspondence with Dr. R. Frankel, who has studied wine-pressing complexes in great depth, he was able to point out in the Nazareth basins certain features typical of collecting vats which may not be immediately obvious to anyone but an expert. He writes:

Both basins ... could definitely be collecting vats, and in fact the steps and depression in the corners are very typical. The "plastered space" d on fig. 70¹²⁴ (see Figure 22) is typical of the straining depressions in Galilean wine-presses and the basalt stone fitted into the mosaic in fig. 187¹²⁵ (see Photo 12)... is to break the flow of the grape juices so that it does not damage the mosaic.¹²⁶


It should be remembered that the entire area was, during the Roman period, a hive of agricultural activity. Only 20 m. away from basin no.12 there is a wine-pressing zone with a small sloping treading area (no.34)¹²⁷, about 3 m. square and 40 cm. deep, and an underground fermenting vat (c,d: the so-called "Virgin's Kitchen") to which the juice ran through a hole. As was stated above, this complex was connected to the Grotto of the

Annunciation (no.31) by a tunnel (e), so that it is safe to assume that the cave formed part of the complex. Bagatti has noted that on the west side of the cave, near the entrance, there was a rock-cut hole 10 cm. wide and 10 cm. deep which would have been used for holding a pointed storage jar or amphora¹²⁹ and further north there are two depressions 58 cm. in diameter, which may be the remains of basins¹²⁹ (these may also have been for large storage jars). In the cave no.29 there is a small basin¹³⁰, the use of which has not been determined, but it is possible that this part of the cave complex was also used in wine production; the walls which separate it from the large cave no.31 are artificial and formerly it would have been a kind of alcove. Furthermore, if the recess (d) in the basin under the nave was a straining depression, then on the basis of the usual plan of wine-pressing installations one would expect the treading area to be located immediately north, underneath mosaic 1 and right in front of the cave complex. This treading area would then become a bridge between the collecting vat (no.12) and the rest of the system. The level of the rock from the top of the steps to the basin is flat, cut to create a level surface for the mosaic at the time the area was converted to a Christian use. The natural ground level can be seen south of the basin; it slopes down¹³¹. Therefore, one can presume that this slope continued north of the basin before the mosaic came to be laid, and that the area was then an ideal site for a treading area.

The knife used for grape-cutting would have been dropped into the basin at the time of its original employment. One would expect other artefacts in the fill to have derived from the period of the basin's absorption into the first building here. Since the basin does not align with any features of this building (the "stylobate" wall in fact passes within a few centimetres of the basin's south-west corner), it is highly unlikely that it was utilised. It must have been filled in when the building came to be constructed. If mosaic 1b dates to the time of the construction of the basilica, then it is probable that further debris was deposited in the basin prior to its being covered over. This is confirmed by the evidence of the fill. At the topmost level, close to the stylobate wall of the basilica¹³² there was a heap of plaster fragments which appear to have derived from the first building. These fell on top of pre-existing fill while the second building, the basilica, was being constructed and may come from the "stylobate" wall of the first building. Many of these pieces were inscribed with graffiti. One other later piece is a fragment of Roman redware with a distinctive marking of small lines arranged to form a circle¹³³. Hayes has classified the circle design as occurring from c.350-380¹³⁴. The rosette on the same piece, composed of incised wedges, is mainly found from 330-360¹³⁵. This determines the date of the making but not the date of the breaking of the vessel.

Since it is imported, this object would probably date from the latter part of the fourth century at the earliest. Loffreda has found the same kind of pattern in Capernaum on fourth-century redware¹³⁶. Largely, however, the basin was full of field stones, a few nari blocks, earth and various bits of pottery dating from the late Roman period¹³⁷. This is what we would expect of a fill from the time of the earliest building, if we were to date this building to the middle of the fourth century.

The presence of coloured plaster pieces is consistent with the evidence of the re-used blocks from the first building found in the walls of the basilica, which have coloured and white plaster coating. The earlier building must then have been coated with decorative plaster. The graffiti on the plaster pieces found in the basin are mainly in Greek, though three are Syriac¹³⁸. There are part of names as well as a cross with dots in the spaces between the arms¹³⁹. Only one clear Greek name can be distinguished, that of Sisinius¹⁴⁰. According to Preisigke¹⁴¹, Σισίνιος is a name first found in fifth-century papyri; its other spelling Σισίννιος occurs in the seventh to eighth centuries¹⁴². Foraboschi places the name in the sixth to eighth centuries¹⁴³. Y.E. Meimaris has noted that the name appears on a bronze cross from Khirbet el-Mird¹⁴⁴, probably to be dated to the sixth century. The Syriac graffiti seem to contain the names Λω, found from the first century onwards in Greek (Ιωάννης) and

(possibly)  which is found in Greek transliteration (Αμοὺν) in papyri from the third to the seventh centuries¹⁴⁵. Since the languages of the graffiti do not include Hebrew or Palestinian Jewish Aramaic, they demonstrate that visitors to this place came from outside Jewish Nazareth; they were pilgrims rather than local residents and, moreover, Christians, as the cross demonstrates. We are then justified in referring to the building which existed prior to the basilica as a church of some kind.

Excavations under the Mosaics of the Basilica and Monastery

Mosaic no.5 of the southern aisle rested on a layer of lime in which were small pieces of white marble, fragments of pottery and a very small coin. Under this was the earlier mosaic no. 4, which rested on a bed of lime, earth and stones, then another layer of lime¹⁴⁶. In order to build up a solid foundation to the height of the nave, a large quantity of fill was deposited on the sloping bedrock. In this fill was pottery¹⁴⁷ including many Roman lamp fragments¹⁴⁸, a glass hanging lamp of a type used in Byzantine churches¹⁴⁹, pieces of the earlier church building and tiles¹⁵⁰ on which mortar was attached.

The presence of a very small coin need not throw back the dating of the upper mosaic. Bagatti states that

the coin was pre-Byzantine because of its size¹⁵¹, but it was not until 498, under Anastasius I, that there was a currency reform in which a large bronze follis of 40 nummi was introduced to replace smaller denominations of 20, 10 and 5. The nummus, prior to the reform, measured 9 mm in diameter¹⁵². The old nummus would not have gone out of circulation immediately. Small oxidised nummi of the low denominations are extremely common in Byzantine sites of the fifth to seventh centuries.

Excavation of the monastery uncovered a floor in which were more of the small coins. Under this were part of an altar colonnette, fragments of tiles, pieces of white marble¹⁵³ pottery, glass, painted plaster and about 70 pieces of the earlier building¹⁵⁴. Some of the pieces from the previous building have recently been re-drawn by E. Alliata and re-published by Corbo¹⁵⁵.

A Reconstruction of the Early Church

Taking all the fragments of the previous building together, it can be concluded that the building was constructed of nari stone, and provided with a tiled roof supported by wooden beams. It was decorated with painted plaster and small pieces of white marble (possibly from a floor). Two of the blocks have cavities in which to rest wooden beams¹⁵⁶ and two of the bases have slots along their length¹⁵⁷. The various parts of the building, which include 5 column bases, upon some of which are

pilgrim graffiti¹⁵⁸, three plastered imposts of a double arch, two capitals, several cornices with different mouldings and proportions and the remains of plaster, various doorposts with remains of plaster and graffiti as well as other blocks with plaster and graffiti, have been used by Corbo in a convincing reconstruction of the earlier building. Corbo concludes that, in the construction of the early church (which he calls a "chiesa-sinagoga"), the cave area was cut away from the surrounding rocky outcrop and the rock, which declined to the south was, as we have seen, levelled. The Chapel of the Angel was expanded and walls were built within the cave complex, along with the two flights of steps (for the western flight, see Photo 13). Corbo has the ingenious idea that a line of columns resting on a low wall constituted a transenna in front of the cave complex¹⁵⁹, from the steps leading to the Chapel of the Angel for 8 metres to the west wall. Not only does this make sense of some of the architectural elements, but in suggesting that the column bases rested on a low wall, Corbo is able to explain why pilgrims were disposed to scratch on these which, if they rested on the ground, would be rather low. This transenna of columns also solves the problem of how the builders constructed the roof over the cave complex¹⁶⁰; it formed a central support. It also explains why pilgrims would have entered the cave complex by the steps to the Chapel of the Angel, instead of walking through to the Grotto of the

Annunciation directly; with the transenna in front of it there would have been no access.

The Grotto of the Annunciation is much changed from its Byzantine form but, to recapitulate on what has already been said, it is clear that there was an apse, upon which Vlainck saw pieces of mosaic¹⁶¹ in the east. The present floor is lower than the Byzantine level, so that whatever mosaic it once had has been destroyed. The cave measures 5.50 x 6.14m, but in the Byzantine period it extended southwards for a further few metres. The rocky bank appears to have been cut back by the Crusaders¹⁶². Sherds found in rock fissures within the grotto date from Hellenistic to Byzantine times¹⁶³. There are a few fragments of plaster on the wall, but only four Greek letters upon these have survived the passage of time. All that can be known about its form in the early church is that it had an east-facing apse. The apse would not have been carved out of the wall during the time of the later basilica, because the basilica's apse superseded the one cut into the wall of the cave. It would appear that this was where the altar was placed in the earliest period of the cave's Christian use. This coheres with Egeria's remarks that an altar was placed in a cave.

The small cave no. 29, 2 m. wide, was discovered by Vlainck¹⁶⁴ and studied by Viaud¹⁶⁵. It is considered by Bagatti to have been a memorial to the legendary martyr

Conon¹⁶⁶ whom Bagatti deems a Jewish-Christian. The walls built on either side of the entrance and those forming the Chapel of the Angel derive from time of the construction of the early church and are covered with plaster. Mosaic no.3 was cut through in its southern part, probably when the same was done to the floor of the venerated grotto in the eighteenth century. On the north side is a rocky ledge and on the east wall six layers of plaster have been preserved¹⁶⁷ with a profuse amount of graffiti. The earliest plaster layer was decorated with a mass of flowers on leafy stalks (Photos 14 and 15) and a wreath (Photo 16). Again, there is no definite evidence that would determine when the cave came to be venerated except the graffiti, which is all Greek and demonstrates that the cave was first visited when Greek-speaking pilgrims came to Palestine, some time in the fourth century. A coin identified by Bagatti as being minted in Antioch during the reign of Constans (341-346) was found in layer c of the plaster. This indicates a terminus ante quem for coat c, but not a terminus post quem, as Bagatti appears to think¹⁶⁸. Despite Bagatti's suggestion, there is also no clue as to what the cave was used for in the Byzantine period. Daniel the Abbot reports that the small cave was the tomb of Joseph (Zhitie 90)¹⁶⁹.

Corbo also notes that since the rock falls away to the south and a level was built up only when the monastery was constructed, then the early church structure was probably entered from the west. The barrier

of columns divided the structure into two parts¹⁷⁰; on the north was the cave complex and in the south an open space. The entire building including the cave complex measured only 16 x 20 m. It can be added that pilgrims coming in from the west would have walked over to the north-facing mosaic, which led them in the direction of the entrance to the cave complex. They would then go eastward to pray before the altar, of which a fragment of a colonnette remains¹⁷¹, placed in front of the rock-cut apse in the Grotto of the Annunciation.

Bagatti has identified this structure as a Jewish-Christian synagogue-church solely on the basis of the form of its few architectural elements that have been preserved. He writes that these "manifest a style well known from the synagogues of Galilee, whose mouldings are very similar"¹⁷². Bagatti fails to remember that synagogues and churches shared architectural features during the Byzantine period. They were distinguished not by the forms of column bases and capitals but by details (such as a hollow space below the apse for Torah scroll or the community chest in the case of a synagogue), symbolic motifs and, as C. Kraeling notes, in orientation: synagogues were oriented toward Jerusalem and churches to the east¹⁷³. The early structure in Nazareth has an east-facing apse. Because of the slope of the rock, it would not have been entered from the south. Although mosaic 1a is oriented north, its orientation

directs pilgrims to the steps leading to the cave area and does not dictate the axis of the early church. Moreover, if this structure was oriented north, this would make it face away from Jerusalem; a northern orientation is unlikely as much for a synagogue as for a church. Irenaeus states that the "Ebionites" adored Jerusalem as if it were the House of God (Adv. Haer. 1.26.2); why would they then turn away from it? The form of the building, from the available remains and from Corbo's reconstruction, bears no resemblance whatsoever to a synagogue. It is an unconventional structure designed to encompass the cave complex in a practicable manner.

To further support his thesis, Bagatti includes two marble columns taken from relatively modern masonry near the Byzantine convent, as part of the architectural pieces of the early structure. These pieces have six symbols: a pomegranate, crown, two concentric circles and a flower. That they reveal "well accented Judaeo-Christian characteristics"¹⁷⁴ is a matter he does not explain. Since the early Christian structure was not built with any marble, it is very unlikely that they should be considered part of it. Testa has interpreted inscribed markings on the piece of marble found in the Crusader church as being Aramaic of the first to second centuries and, moreover, a passage out of the Targum of Isaiah¹⁷⁵. Even if this were so, it does not connect the piece with the hypothetical synagogue-church.

Bagatti notes that there is evidence of weathering on some of the pieces of the earlier structure, which indicates that the place was long in use¹⁷⁶. The type of stone used was not of optimum quality and would not have weathered as well as marble. A century would have been sufficient time for the weathering to take place.

The Graffiti

A detailed analysis of each graffito found in the excavations of the Byzantine basilica is not required here. A few matters will be mentioned in order to refute Bagatti's and Testa's theory that the graffiti demonstrate the existence of Jewish-Christians and, and to discuss the relevance of the graffiti for dating.

To begin with, it should be noted that graffiti nos. 1 (Photo 17, top), 8 (Photo 18, middle) and 17 are written in Armenian. There is no doubt that Armenian pilgrims came to Palestine already in the fourth century¹⁷⁷ and continued to visit throughout the Byzantine period¹⁷⁸, but they did not write in Armenian. The Armenian alphabet is generally held to have been invented by Mesrop-Mashtotz around the year 404¹⁷⁹. The inscription of the earliest Armenian mosaic in Palestine, dated to the fifth century, is in Greek¹⁸⁰, while mosaic pavements with the Armenian script date from the sixth and seventh centuries¹⁸¹, which shows that it took some time for literacy in the Armenian alphabet to become

widespread. In the middle of the fifth century, the Armenians founded a scriptorium in Jerusalem, which undoubtedly helped spread Armenian literacy amongst the community there¹⁰². The graffiti cannot therefore predate the fifth century, and it is safer to date them later rather than earlier in this period, probably even to the sixth. Armenian was scratched on the rock faces of the Wadi Haggag by pilgrims on their way to Jebel Musa, but again these cannot be dated before the late fifth century¹⁰³.

Given the very close relations that existed between the Armenian church and the church of Jerusalem, it would be most unlikely that Armenian pilgrims would go to a site venerated by a supposed heretical sect. It was not until the Council of Chalcedon in 451, when the Armenian church rejected the decisions there and identified themselves with monophysite theology, that they broke with orthodoxy¹⁰⁴, but the rift did not become critical until the time of Justinian. Even so, that a group of fifth-century Armenians should have visited a place identified by Bagatti as a heterodox Jewish-Christian shrine would have been very strange indeed. Despite their monophysite beliefs, they were part of the mainstream of monasticism and pilgrimage in Palestine. As A.K. Sanjian writes:

The wide breach occasioned by the Christological decisions of the Council of Chalcedon (451) did not seriously affect the religious harmony among the heterogeneous Christian communities in the Holy

City; rather, for about a century after Chalcedon, all Christians remained under the spiritual authority of the patriarch of Jerusalem and, regardless of their ethnic origins, shared in common worship at the Holy Places.¹⁸⁵

It seems to be clear from graffiti nos. 5 and 10 that the pilgrims came to Nazareth to venerate Mary. Graffito no.5 reads (somewhat ungrammatically) in part: (Y)ΠO AΓIΩ TOTTO M.. "under the holy place (of?) M(ary?)¹⁸⁶. Graffito no.10 (Photo 19) reads XE MAPIA: a pointed reference to the Christian belief that it was here that the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would bear the future Messiah (cf. Luke 1:28).

It is an underlying purpose in the Bagatti-Testa school's discussion of Nazareth to show that the veneration of Mary was extremely ancient (even Jewish-Christian)¹⁸⁷. As J. Briand writes in the English version of the popular guidebook to Nazareth:

It's easy to imagine the joy and emotion of Father Bagatti and his team of researchers when they discovered, carved by a clumsy hand on the base of a column, the first Greek words of the Angelic Salutation: Ke MAPIA (sic); this was the Marian devotion of the very early church coming to light.¹⁸⁸

Briand goes on to tell his readers that palaeographic study of the inscription dates it to the second or third centuries¹⁸⁹, an attribution which derives from Testa's conclusions¹⁹⁰ based on Bagatti's cursory palaeographic observations¹⁹¹, which are almost entirely derived from a knowledge of ossuary inscriptions that are, in this case, irrelevant to the item under consideration. The fact that

the internal lines of the M do not join up is the result of the exigencies of the media (sharp object/knife on plaster/stone) rather than intent.

Furthermore, it is very unlikely indeed that any Jewish-Christians venerated the Virgin Mary. One of the principal matters for which the Church Fathers condemned "Ebionites" and others (Cerinthus in particular) was their refusal to accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus and their continued belief that Jesus was the physical, ordinary son of Joseph and Mary¹²². Eusebius actually distinguishes a second group of Ebionites who do accept the Virgin Birth but, as Klijn and Reinink have convincingly argued, this is a result of Eusebius' misinterpretation of Irenaeus¹²³.

It would seem more probable that these graffiti showing a great respect for Mary were inscribed close to the time of the third ecumenical council at Ephesus, which gave impetus to Marian devotion by upholding her title of "Theotokos" after attacks against it by Nestorians.

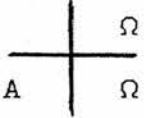
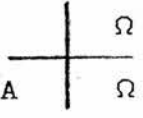
On the eastern wall of cave no.19, on the earliest painted plaster, there is an inscription painted in red, punctuated by the floral motifs¹²⁴. This inscription has been provided with a Jewish-Christian interpretation by Bagatti and Testa, who have also supplied a number of missing and doubtful letters. It shall therefore be examined anew here.

The reading of the inscription (Figure 26, Photo

20) is by no means clear. The first readable word is TON, an accusative masculine form of the definite article, which suggests that something came before it. The word following is unclear, but seems to contain the letters C€. Under TON are the letters P€A, which may be the end of the word δωρεά, "gift", though this is conjecture. There is a Greek cross with the letters alpha and omega in the spaces, of a common Byzantine type, and under this are the abbreviations of "Lord Jesus": KY XP followed by CWCQN, "save" and then what appears to be a name in larger letters reading __N ΔQN (with a masculine accusative ending). On the next line there is COYOYAEPIANTHN_EITASO__O. The σοϛ should be placed with the preceding name: "your ()ndos" rather than with the possible name Oulera that follows. Ούλερια is a name not found in the papyri, but Ούαλερια is common, found from the second to the fourth centuries¹³⁵. The omission of an expected καί between the names is not unusual in Byzantine inscriptions. The remainder of the line does not read clearly. The mark shaped like a Latin S may be an abbreviation for αὐτός(etc)¹³⁶ preceded by εἶπα, "I said". Underneath this line is KAIΔOCAYTH, καὶ δός αὐτῇ, "and give to her" but the following letters are unclear. There may be ΦNΩ(or O), after which is NΦO. The inscription finishes with __N XPIC, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ(cf. 1 Cor. 16:24). To sum up, the lower portion of the inscription may read: "Lord Jesus, save your (__)dos

(and) Ouleria who(?) I myself said ... and give her ...
in Christ Jesus. Amen."

Given this, the reading of the inscription
by Bagatti and Testa¹⁹⁷ appears somewhat free. They read:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Τὸν μνωσέω | The memory |
| 2. ῥέ(ζω) φω(τί) | I made for the light |
| 3. | |
|  |  |
| 4. κύρ(ε) χρί(στε) σωσον τήν
δαύλην | Christ Lord, save your servant |
| 5. σοῦ οὐ(α)λεριαν τήνα
εἰπά(μεν) [εἰπά(μην)?]
[εἶπα(το)?] θ(ν)η(τόν)
όνομα) | Valeria. Here we praised
the death of N.
and give to suffering the palm |
| 6. καὶ ὁδ(ς) λυπη(ν) φοί(νυ)κον
φο [φοι?] | which (it is customary to give) |
| 7. ν(ω) χρισ(τοῦ) [χρισ(τῶ)?] | to one who died for Christ. |
| 8. Ἀμήν. | Amen. |

This version attempts to draw a relationship between the inscription and the supposed use of cave no.29 as a martyrrium for Conon, but this is based on extensive restoration and recourse to abbreviations. Many of the letters read by Testa and Bagatti as sure readings are unclear or even, it seems, absent altogether.

In a second painted inscription done in red, Bagatti attempts to see a kappa, which he suggests may be the first letter of the name Conon. Since almost nothing remains of this letter, this is impossible to verify¹⁹⁸. Other graffiti of the earliest level of plaster possibly contain the Greek names Genos, Elpisos, Achilles, Elpidius, Paulus Antonis¹⁹⁹ and Julia or Julius²⁰⁰.

Bagatti's date "no later than the third century"²⁰¹ for the transformation of this cave into a holy place is on the basis of these graffiti unjustified. As with the graffiti found in basin no.12, these should be dated to the period when Christian pilgrims first came to Palestine from outside, some time in the fourth century.

None of the other graffiti understood by Bagatti and Testa to be indicative of a Jewish-Christian mentality is clearly convincing. Their pièce de résistance²⁰², a figure holding on object upon which is a cross (Photo 21), identified by Bagatti as John the Baptist with a Jewish head covering²⁰³, is in fact a depiction of a helmeted soldier with an ensign and a shield, in a stance much found on early Byzantine coins, as I have argued elsewhere²⁰⁴.

The interpretations given by Bagatti and Testa to letters, crosses and other motifs are generally Gnostic rather than Jewish-Christian. Bagatti and Testa show a tendency to understand unintentional scratches as the Hebrew letter waw (written in the Jewish script)²⁰⁵, which is then given a mystical meaning. The onomasticon of the graffiti scratched on the parts of the early church building possibly has the names Ananias (no.1), Naukida (no.2), Zeninoi (no.11), Ruth (no.12) and Leones (no.13)²⁰⁶. There is nothing written in Hebrew or Aramaic. The Hebrew names, Ruth and Ananias, are Biblical, and were therefore prone to be adopted by Christians.

Other Remains in Nazareth

As we saw in the discussion of literature pertaining to Nazareth, Bagatti believed there were two Jewish-Christian edifices: one the House of Mary and the other the House of Joseph. It so happens that the Franciscans own the present Church of St. Joseph, under which they would like to site this second very ancient, if entirely hypothetical, shrine. According to Bagatti, this is the church mentioned for the first time by Adomnan as standing on two vaults on the site where once there was the house in which Jesus was nurtured (De Loc. Sanct. 11.26.1-4). Adomnan writes that between the vaults there were arches and a clear spring, used by the entire population, from which water was brought up to the church above by a winch. Moreover, Bagatti thinks this is the synagogue referred to by Peter the Deacon as being turned into a church²⁰⁷ because Peter mentions a place where Mary drew water as being a cave. Peter, in fact, is confusing the Grotto of the Annunciation described by Egeria with contemporary accounts of the cave in which is the spring of St. Gabriel (cf. John Phocas, x.4-5).

The subterranean remains under the present Church of St. Joseph have been discussed by Viaud²⁰⁸. There are a number of silos and the aforementioned basin in a cave now known as "the Grotto of the Holy Family"²⁰⁹. The cave appears to have been converted into a sacred place

by the Crusaders; before then it appears to have been a Roman-Byzantine agricultural area. There is nothing here that identifies the area as a Jewish-Christian baptistery (pace Testa). It is first identified as the workshop of Joseph in the seventeenth century, by Quaresimus, as Kopp has already pointed out²¹⁰. The discussion by Kopp is sufficient to refute any assertion that this was an ancient venerated place or the second church identified by Adomnan and need not be repeated here.

Whether Adomnan is referring to the spring under the Church of St. Gabriel or under the property of the Sisters of Nazareth can remain a contentious point, though a good case for seeing the latter as the place has been made by J.-B. Livio²¹¹.

The synagogue need not be connected with Jewish-Christians; the Jews appear to have taken Christian pilgrims to their own synagogue rather than to a Christian structure called such²¹². It was converted into a church only after the Jews were expelled from the town (see above). Four column bases of white calcite coming from the synagogue have been discovered²¹³. These have masons' marks of lamed, dalet, final mem and a type of tet curiously more similar to Nabataean than the usual Jewish script. The Greek Orthodox consider their church as being on the site of the synagogue, though Dalman thought it was located on the site of the United Greek property²¹⁴ and reports that four rectangular blocks with

Hebrew letters were discovered nearby²¹⁵.

Conclusions

It is now possible to conclude that there existed in Nazareth, from the middle of the fourth century, a small and unconventional church which encompassed a cave complex. Cave no.31, which Egeria refers to as "big and very splendid"²¹⁶ was understood to be where Mary received the message that she would bear a child (Luke 1:26-38) and also where she lived (cf. Pet. Diac. Lib. T). If it was considered her abode, then it is possible that the structure itself came to be called the House of Mary, after the name of the cave. This would explain why the Piacenza Pilgrim (Itin. v) wrote that "the House of St. Mary is now a basilica," rather than "a basilica has been built over the House of St. Mary."

This early church was visited by numerous pilgrims, but the structure was modest. It did not attract as many visitors as the great holy places of Jerusalem. It was located in a Jewish town, and visitors may have had to encamp in the actual church or gone on to Diocaesarea for lodgings. The main road from Ptolemais to Tiberias bypassed Nazareth 7 km. to the north, so that Nazareth was a detour (cf. Epiphanius Mon. Hag. x.1.3-19). Egeria came to Nazareth from the south, from Neapolis, but later Samaritans were hostile to Christian pilgrims, and travellers such as Epiphanius avoided it²¹⁷.

The House of Mary was demolished in order that a basilica could be constructed. From the archaeological evidence, it would appear that this probably took place at the very end of the fifth century or the beginning of the sixth. The early church may have been damaged by an earthquake²¹⁸ or else there may have been an increase in pilgrim traffic which warranted a larger structure. There is no evidence that the basilica was structurally damaged by the people of Nazareth, even if they did fight against Heraclius²¹⁹. One of the two big churches in Nazareth seen by Arculf is clearly the basilica (De Loc. Sanct. ii.26.1-5). Forty years later, Willibald found this church alone. It was under the jurisdiction of the Muslim authorities who had wanted to demolish it; they demanded from the Christians a ransom to ensure its preservation (Hugeburc, Vita Will. xiii). The Commemoratorium (xli) mentions twelve monks in Nazareth. The anonymous Life of Constantine (ix) from the ninth century²²⁰ refers to the sanctuary of the Theotokos, so we can presume the basilica was still standing. It may have been in a state of some disrepair by this time; a situation which was not helped by Muslim attacks. Saewulf (xxvii) says that Nazareth was in ruins, apart from the "very famous monastery".

The basilica then survived six centuries, while the earlier church stood only two, at the most. Given the remains and the dating, it is very likely that the early church, the "House of Mary", was constructed by the

convert Joseph of Tiberias²²¹. There is nothing to suggest that the church was a "synagogue-church" built by Jewish-Christians. No evidence provides any justification for our supposing that Jewish-Christians occupied the town in the second and third centuries. The site of the Shrine of the Annunciation, once part of a wine-pressing complex, was converted to Christian use, probably partly to encourage pilgrimage, in the middle of the fourth century.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CAPERNAUM

The site of ancient Capernaum is located on the north side of the Sea of Galilee. The western part of the site is owned by the Franciscans. It is here that there is the famous synagogue, the dating of which has been so fiercely debated, and the remains of a Byzantine octagonal church on the alleged site of the house of St. Peter. The eastern part of ancient Capernaum is owned by the Greek Orthodox Church. Excavations here have as yet uncovered less sensational structures.

In this chapter, the focus will be the Franciscan side of the town (Photo 22), particularly the so-called "House of Peter" and the claims made by the excavators that the octagonal church was built upon a Jewish-Christian house-church. It will also be necessary to consider the question of the limestone synagogue, and what it might tell us about Capernaum in the early Byzantine period.

The "House of Peter" and the Octagonal Church

Part of a basalt octagonal structure (Photo 23) south of the synagogue ruins was first uncovered by a Franciscan, Wendelin Hinterkeuser, prior to the First World War. In May 1921, excavations continued under the

direction of Father Gaudence Orfali. He brought to light the rest of the building and the remains of mosaic pavements with a central motif of a peacock, as well as the walls of more ancient houses¹ (see Figure 27). As a result of his excavations, it was determined that the main structure consisted of three octagons, one inside the other (8, 16.5 and 23 metres wide respectively).

In April 1968, V. C. Corbo and S. Loffreda began renewed excavations at the site and proceeded to dig over a large area of the Franciscan property. The excavations continue until this day, although the region around the octagonal structure is now being enclosed within a large modern church². Corbo identified two strata below the area of the octagonal structure: firstly, a house-church of the fourth century and, secondly, domestic buildings constructed late in the Hellenistic period which underwent subsequent modifications (see Figure 28). The three levels will be looked at individually in order to check the dating and to examine conclusions drawn concerning the Jewish-Christians.

A fifth-century dating of the octagonal structure³ seems reasonably sure on the basis of coins from the first two decades of the fifth century found beneath the mosaic pavements⁴ and from pottery. Nevertheless, it should probably be dated later rather than earlier in this century⁵. As Gideon Foerster points out, the structure is very similar in plan to the Church of the Theotokos on Mount Gerizim built by the Emperor Zeno

after the Samaritan revolt of 484⁶ (Figure 29:A). The Church of the Theotokos was larger and far more impressive in construction, and it would make better sense if the builder of the octagonal church at Capernaum gained the architectural concept from Zeno's splendid edifice rather than the other way around (cf. Figure 29:A and B).

The apse and small baptismal font at the Capernaum octagon were, according to Corbo, constructed after the main part⁷, because a lime floor between the middle octagon and the eastern wall was found to run under the platform for the apse. It is just possible that the apse was constructed not very much later than the rest of the building: mistakes could be made and may have been corrected in the course of the same building operation. However, a church without an apse is a curiosity which may suggest that it was a memorial or pilgrim church with no altar or regularly assigned clergy⁸, just like the Church of the Theotokos on Mount Gerizim. Although the latter did have an apse, no trace of an ambo, chancel, synthronos or altar have been found. It did have, however, a focus for prayer: a fragment of rock taken from "Holy Calvary"⁹.

Whatever was the focus for prayer in the octagonal church of Capernaum is unknown, but it is interesting that Egeria mentions, in regard to an earlier structure, that it was here that the Lord healed the paralytic (Mark

2:1-12); some relic of this event may therefore have been displayed. The only pilgrim that mentions a church in Capernaum which just might correspond to the octagonal structure calls it, somewhat strangely, a "basilica" (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. vii), but of course it was nothing like a basilica. This sixth-century pilgrim does say it was where the House of Peter used to be located, which corresponds with Egeria's testimony to the existence of such a place almost 200 years earlier (for which, see below). Later sources, however, do not confirm the existence of a House of Peter. They speak rather of a "house of Saint John the Theologian" (Epiphanius Mon., Hag. x.1; S. Hel. et Const. Vit. vii) or "a house and a great wall ... where Zebedee used to live, and his sons John and James" (Hugeburc, Vita Will. xiv). Pieces of gold tesserae found in the Greek Orthodox excavations would appear to derive from this structure, since gold tesserae were used in Byzantine Palestine only within churches. This may mean that there was some kind of basilical church in the eastern side of the town by the time the relevant part of Epiphanius the Monk's account was written¹⁰, probably between the eighth and ninth centuries. There remains a possibility that the Piacenza Pilgrim believed he was seeing the House of Peter when in fact he was shown a new basilical church that, perhaps, became known as the "House of John" (theologian or apostle). If this is so, then the octagonal church may have been in ruins by A.D.570, when

the pilgrim wrote.

At the second level, the remains of the so-called house-church, the archaeological evidence has permitted a reconstruction of an area bordered by an enclosure wall measuring 27 metres on the north, west and south sides and 30 metres in the east (Figure 28). The enclosed area was entered by a door on the south side, near the corner with the west wall. Another wall ran from this entrance for 16 metres northwards, 6 metres distant from the west wall. Another door was situated opposite the first in the north wall. It is difficult to know how many of the domestic buildings of the area were preserved as part of the fourth century complex within the enclosure wall, but there was a central structure which appears to have been utilised as a Christian church. The rooms of a previous dwelling were made into a large room (1) measuring 5.80 x 6.40 metres. This was provided with an arch which subdivided the space into an eastern and western part. Rooms 2, 4 and 5 were included in the central complex, which in total measured approximately 10 by 11 metres. Certain walls were rebuilt. A roof of strong mortar replaced a previous roof of branches, earth and straw. The walls were plastered and painted with vegetal (Photo 24) and geometric motifs, and upon the plaster Christian pilgrims scratched their characteristic graffiti (see for examples, Photos 25 and 26). Additional rooms were

constructed to the east and to the north¹¹.

At the very outset, it is important to note that the employment of the term "house-church" for the fourth-century structure may be misleading. A house-church is generally thought to be an owner-occupied home in which a room or rooms have been converted for Christian assemblies. A house-church served as a meeting place for an established Christian community¹². From the very beginning, Christians assembled in private houses (Acts 1:13; 2:46; 9:37; 20:9; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15, Philemon 2). At Dura Europos, however, the entire house seems to have been made over for Christian use (c. A.D.231), incorporating an impressive baptistery and a bema for the cathedra¹³. The same is true for the house-church of Kirk-Bizzeh in Syria (c.300-330); it was almost entirely converted¹⁴, with an eastern sanctuary and a horseshoe-shaped ambo with cathedra. The private owners had in both cases given over the house to the community. The presence of architectural features which reflect the employment of the buildings for active Christian ritual and practice (baptistery, ambo, cathedra) and the efforts made in both Kirk-Bizzeh and Dura Europos to expand the available space to accommodate many people, both show that these buildings were used by active Christian communities. By contrast, the house-church at Capernaum seems bare and artificial. There are no vestiges of anything that might have been employed in the course of active Christian instruction, initiation or worship. The main room is not

large, and no efforts have been made to expand it. The language of the graffiti, mainly Greek, demonstrates that it was a place visited by those from afar, rather than a meeting place for local Aramaic-speaking Christians (see below for a discussion of the alleged Aramaic graffiti). Instead of being employed within the church area, much of the space bordered by the enclosure wall was left open. The reason for this was surely to accommodate the horses and donkeys of travellers, and indeed the travellers themselves. The structure in Capernaum is formed out of the component parts of previous dwellings, but in calling it a "house-church" this may predispose us to assume too much. As with Zeno's vigilantly-guarded church on Mount Gerizim, so also here: the presence of a church does not necessarily imply the presence of a Christian community in situ which actively used it for worship and instruction.

At this stage it is useful to consider what Egeria reports about the church she saw at Capernaum. She writes that the "house of the prince of the apostles¹⁵ has been made into a church, with its original walls still standing" (Pet. Diac. Lib. V2)¹⁶. This would fit with the archaeological evidence of the fourth-century "house-church". A domestic dwelling used throughout the Roman period had been utilised as the structural foundation for a church. This church, however, was unusual. It had no apse, though it may have had some

kind of relic as a focus for prayer. It was small for a church, even if large for a room. Around it was a spacious courtyard with, perhaps, some of the old buildings still standing to provide shelter for visitors.

What then can be made of the suggestions by the excavators that a pre-existing house-church served the Jewish-Christian community of Capernaum, before the fourth century renovations? As was argued above in Chapter Three, the minim in Capernaum mentioned in Qohélet Rabba (1:8) are by no means necessarily Jewish-Christians. The excavators assume that the reference to minim is a reference to Jewish-Christians¹⁷. Corbo's suggestion that Joseph of Tiberias built the fourth-century structure in Capernaum does not alter his identification of the place as fundamentally Jewish-Christian since, according to him, Joseph was himself a Jewish-Christian¹⁸. A Jew who became an orthodox Christian was not, however, a Jewish-Christian in any technical sense. Joseph was no sectarian. Furthermore, as Strange notes in his review of the Capernaum publications:

What is somewhat irritating ... is that Corbo seems to believe it is self-evident that "Judeo-Christians" ... are the builders of this structure (the house-church)¹⁹

and:

Corbo and the other excavators in this expedition appear to have settled on a set of presuppositions about the religious and ethnic identity of the people of Capernaum. That is, they accept as self-evident that the people of Capernaum, Nazareth and other localities are "Judeo-Christians" ...

(but) Corbo nowhere in this report advances this as a working hypothesis and then tests it against the evidence. In fact, there is no definition of "Judeo-Christian" anywhere in the text, which suggests that Corbo and the other authors regard it as self-evident, or that it has been amply demonstrated elsewhere.²⁰

Corbo and Loffreda do indeed consider it self-evident, for they are deeply influenced by the hypotheses of Bagatti and Testa and seem to have relied upon them to supply the correct interpretation of the evidence relating to the ethnic and religious characteristics of the population. Neither Loffreda, as an expert on pottery, nor Corbo, an astute archaeologist, were equipped as historians to interpret the literary data or the graffiti. The interpretation of the graffiti was left to Testa, who applied his hypothesis about Jewish-Christianity in Palestine to its reading at every turn.

A detailed examination of each graffito is not required here, and for the moment it is necessary to complete the examination of the strata in the area of the octagonal church by turning to the remains of the domestic buildings constructed late in the Hellenistic period²¹ (Figure 28). The houses of this part of Capernaum were constructed very roughly out of basalt field stones bound with smaller stones and earth²². The roofs were, as has been said, built of branches, earth and straw, and the floors were made of field stones with earth in the interstices²³. These poor dwellings stand in marked contrast to the buildings excavated in the

Greek Orthodox part of the site. There, up against the present dividing wall between the two sectors and partly underneath it, a bathhouse dating from the Roman period marks the dividing line between the area of poor settlements in the western part of town and better housing to the east. In this eastern part, covered water courses provided a fresh supply of water from the spring further inland (now dry and as yet unlocated); a paved street running north-south contrast with the rather irregular dirt roads in the western part of the town; a public building complex is constructed with fine masonry. Houses are well-built and have lime floors²⁴.

The poorly-constructed settlement to the west stretches all over the excavated part of the Franciscan side in a total of eight known housing blocks or "insulae". The block in which the octagonal church came to be built is known as "insula 1" or the "insula sacra" by the excavators²⁵.

It is clear from the remains that the lower classes lived in the west and the more affluent in the east. As such, the archaeological evidence adds weight to the suggestion that it was in the western part of town that Simon Peter's house was actually located. It should, however, be noted that the two fish-hooks found in the excavations were located in the destruction level of the fourth-century structure, and not in the floor of the earliest domestic building²⁶. They may then have been

placed in the room by pilgrims wishing to recall the activity of Peter. The presence of agricultural equipment such as grinding stones for wheat, stone bowls and craters, presses and handmills in this quarter all show that the people here engaged in agricultural activity and some may have been tenant farmers. This is precisely the area we would expect Jesus to have lived and worked, and it is here we would also expect his first group of disciples to have met together. Would they, all the same, have left any traces?

Corbo believes so. What was left, according to him, was a series of beaten lime floors in room 1, dating back to the first century. No other lime floors were discovered in any other part of the poor western sector of Capernaum; he therefore believes that the floors have a special significance. The fact that it was this room that was made into^a central feature of the fourth-century house-church, and later formed the centre of the octagonal church, convinced Corbo that Jewish-Christians met in this room and somehow venerated it. In short, the fact that there was a series of beaten lime floors in the so-called sala venerata (room 1) was considered proof that this was indeed Peter's house.²⁷

The stratigraphy of room 1 is discussed in detail by Corbo²⁸, but despite the claims made, the evidence is not chronologically conclusive for the lime floors. Four trenches were sunk in the northern part of room 1 to explore the area under the mosaic pavement; from the

west: trenches d, a, b and c (see Figure 30).

Summarising the results, from the mosaic pavement to the virgin soil, the levels were as follows (Figure 31): (1) the mosaic pavement of the octagonal church; (2) a fill of red earth; (2a) the destruction level of the "house-church", which included the fragments of painted plaster from the walls; (3) a polychrome floor of beaten lime; remains of another pavement with fragments of plaster painted red on a bed of stones (A1); a bed of large stones (A2). From this point onwards, the strata are not consistent over the extent of excavated region. There is a difference between what was found in the western third of the excavated space and the eastern two-thirds, suggesting that there was a ~~a~~ dividing line, perhaps a wall, between these two areas which was removed in later rebuilding. In the western trench d, beds of basalt stones (B and C) with associated floors of beaten earth follow in close succession to the initial level of fill. Trench a has the same series of basalt beds in the west, but B does not continue underneath the fourth-century northern pilaster^{es}. In the east of trench a there was a stratum of dark brown earth, under level A2. This stratum of earth is found on the eastern two-thirds of the space, appearing also in trenches b and c. Under it, in trenches b and c is a stratum of very black earth and then three successive beaten lime pavements (4), each on a thin bed of black earth, followed by a bed of basalt

stones corresponding to B, which does not continue toward the north. Adjacent to the east side of the northern fourth-century pilaster, excavation below the level of B uncovered four floors of black beaten earth (5) before striking the initial level of fill (6). In trench c there was only fill below the floors of beaten lime.

From this it can be seen that the region of three beaten lime pavements is found between the level of the beds of basalt stones B and A2³⁰.

In dating of the stratigraphy of room 1, it must be remembered that Loffreda's study of the pottery and, more importantly, his dating, forms the basis for a chronology of the strata of the area. If Loffreda's conclusions about the pottery dating are at any time found to be in need of correction, the chronology of the area will have to be revised. We shall begin from the bottom, from the earliest level of fill which formed the foundation for the first pavement of the room. In this level (6) pottery from the second to first centuries B.C.³¹ was discovered. The next level is determined by the bed of basalt stones C in the west and a succession of beaten earth pavements in the east, close to the north pilaster. On the former, was a Hellenistic lamp and fragments of pottery dating from the first century B.C., as well as Herodian lamps and other pieces³² which bring the occupation period of this level to the first century A.D. and possibly to the first part of the second; in the case of the latter, the beaten earth pavements, fragments of

pottery used from the first century B.C., to the middle of the second century A.D.³³ provide evidence of the same general chronology. On the bed of large stones B, there was pottery dated by Loffreda to a range between the first and third centuries. Given also what lies below it, this probably means that bed B was laid in the middle of the first century or the beginning of the second and continued to be used as the western floor until at least the third century. Then comes the succession of lime pavements but, curiously, embedded into them were very minute fragments of lamps identified by Loffreda as being Herodian³⁴. These lime pavements are followed by bed A2. On the bed of small stones (A1) and pavement was a coin of Constans II (341-346)³⁵ and another of the "Late Roman" type³⁶, along with pottery dating in a range between the late fourth and early fifth century³⁷. There was no occupation level on the polychrome pavement (3), but in the destruction level above it was pottery mainly dating to the fifth century, as well as a coin from the time of Valentinian II (364-375), another of 346-361 and a third of the late fourth century³⁸.

Of course, it should be remembered that the presence of a coin of a particular date does not date the pavement to the actual years of the coin's issue. While a coin may come from the reign of Constans II, this does not determine the date of the floor, since we do not know how long coins were in circulation. It is possible to

conclude that the coin of Constans II on the pavement A1 means that the polychrome pavement must have been constructed after the date of the first appearance of this coin, in order to account for it being sandwiched below, but the polychrome pavement (3) could have been constructed fifty or even a hundred years after the date of the coin's issue, if the coin was in circulation for that long. Likewise, the pavement below may have been built at any time before the date of the coin's issue but it could also have been built at any time before the coin went out of circulation.

Much the same goes for pottery. The Herodian lamps found on the bed of stones C and under bed B are therefore much more significant for dating than the tiny fragments of Herodian lamps (if properly identified) found in the lime mixture of the successive pavements (4). The latter could have been embedded in the mix if it was made in a refuse dump outside the city (a probable place for lime-burning), but the lamps sealed under the bed of stones B mean that B must have been laid either during or after the Herodian period, to account for their being sealed below. The identification by Corbo of the lime floors coming from a Jewish-Christian veneration of the domestic building of the first century A.D.³⁹ on the basis of the minute lamp fragments⁴⁰ seems therefore highly contentious.

In summary, it seems quite clear that the western floor C and the succession of beaten earth floors were

constructed in the first century B.C. on fill. The floor was re-laid on a fresh bed of stones (B) at the end of the first century A.D. or the beginning of the second. The use of this continued at least as late as the third century until, at some point, the room was expanded and beaten lime floors were laid, culminating in a final bed of stones (A2). On this a pavement on a bed of small stones (A1) was laid in the mid- to late-fourth century, or even early fifth, over which was laid a polychrome pavement in the fifth century. It is unclear when precisely the intermediate beaten lime floors were laid; they may have been put down as late as the middle of the fourth century, or as early as the beginning of the third. There is insufficient evidence to be conclusive. They did not, however, come from the first century. It should be noted that in Corbo's Tavola III (cf. Figure 31), the north-south (unlabelled) section of room 1 and its adjoining rooms has the level A2 labelled as lying under the north, fourth-century pilaster, implying that the pilaster post-dates the laying of the bed A2, and certainly B; but the stones under the pilaster are much larger than those of bed A2 and lie below the level of A2. It seems much more probable that these form part of the foundation for the pilaster.

While it is impossible to conclude that the succession of beaten lime floors on the eastern side of room 1 come from the middle of the fourth century, it is

equally impossible to prove that they did not derive from this century. The assertion that the plaster of the wall of the room predated the polychrome floor⁴¹ seems only to apply to the final layer of plaster decoration and there were two to three layers before this⁴². For example, the pieces of red plaster on the pavement A1 must derive from a previous plastering of the walls. Corbo assigns A1 to the fourth century also⁴³ though what lies below he considers more ancient. If the polychrome floor 3 was laid as late as the mid-fifth century, and A1 at the beginning of that century, then the lime pavements need not be prior to the fourth century. Rooms 2, 4 and 5 also had floors of beaten lime⁴⁴. Certainly, the location of the lime floors on only two-thirds of the room could suggest that they predate the time of the renovation, which created a larger space supported by an arch. On the other hand, they may also indicate that the eastern part of the room was the more important, and that the builder intended to preserve the memory of the extent of the previous room; the arches themselves divided the space into an eastern and western sector. Given the known plan of the "house-church", pilgrims may have entered the room somewhere on the west and perhaps stood only on the part that was not laid with beaten lime. The clergy, who probably occupied the adjoining rooms (2 and 4) would have been able to enter the room from a door leading from room 4 and would have been the only ones to walk on the beaten lime floor⁴⁵.

Nevertheless, it seems more likely that too much is made of these lime floors as evidence of veneration by Christians. It may well be worth considering whether, even if the beaten lime floors are to be dated prior to the fourth-century developments, this is really so significant. In the Greek Orthodox side of the town, where lime floors have been uncovered in private homes, their existence is testimony only to the higher standard of living in that quarter. In the complete absence of other significant finds, the very most that could be concluded from the presence of third-century lime pavements is that the family who occupied this house were slightly more wealthy than the rest. This is the explanation that seems most convincing. At any rate, there are no grounds for Corbo's view that the lime floors are evidence of Jewish-Christian veneration of the building from the first century onwards.

The Graffiti of the "Domus-Ecclesia"

Despite the extensive discussion of the graffiti by Testa, it is not necessary for each piece to be examined here. Testa considers the graffiti to be largely the work of pilgrims, but somehow considers the pilgrims themselves to be "Jewish-Christians"⁴⁶. The graffiti found on the plaster of the walls of the "domus-ecclesia" are mainly written in Greek (151 examples), with 13 Syriac examples and possibly two in Latin⁴⁷. There are

ten alleged Aramaic graffiti that may be used uncritically to confirm that writers of a Jewish Palestinian Aramaic (viz. Jews) visited the Christian shrine (ergo: they were Jewish-Christians) and therefore these will be examined here. Unfortunately, while there are photographs of some of the graffiti fragments, and while some are on display in the museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum to be checked, some are presented only as figures drawn by Testa from the originals and, since every drawing of this nature may incorporate unconscious interpretations, these must remain a little doubtful. (For my own drawings of the graffiti, see Figure 32.)


1.⁴⁸ Testa identified an Aramaic lamed on top and a gimel underneath. The lamed may just as easily be Nabataean⁴⁹. This may mean that the shrine was visited by a converted Nabataean, but it would be rash to conclude anything on the basis of such a scratch. The lines interpreted by Testa as a gimel recall the cryptogram found in the Bethany cave.

2.⁵⁰ Identified by Testa as Aramaic goph, this letter is as likely to be the remains of a Greek letter rho.

3.⁵¹ The letters are read by Testa as šin, zain and yod. However, the letters can more easily be read as the remains of a Greek psi followed by omega.

4.⁵² The letters here are identified by Testa as ain, zain and final mem. They would seem to be more

probably Greek: omicron, iota and chi. It seems likely, moreover, that the letters should be read the other way up to Testa's reading, given the slip of the diagonal of the chi, so that the sequence would read XI0 (as shown in Figure 32.4). The square form of the omicron was easier to scratch than a round form, and is found at Nazareth, as Testa himself has recorded⁵² as well as elsewhere in Capernaum.

5.⁵⁵ Testa sees qoph followed by mem. The shape with bifid arms on the left may be part of the same cryptogram found in the first example. The letter to the right could be part of an Estrangela semkath: . This letter transliterated the Greek sigma in names ending in -os borrowed from Greek by Syriac.

6.⁵⁶ This fragment has been split into two and is extremely unclear. Testa reads צפרית. Turned upside down, one may just distinguish $\Lambda\theta\epsilon\tau\omicron$, though the piece is marked with many scratches and it is difficult to see which are significant. At any rate, there seems no good reason to see the graffito as being written in Aramaic rather than Greek.

7.⁵⁷ This is clearly Greek read by Testa the wrong way up. The first line reads: - $\text{HI}\epsilon$ and the second: AXNKA . Testa's drawing of the piece is inaccurate, and his reading of: שחה קי cannot be sustained.

8.⁵⁸ Again, this appear to be upside-down Greek. The letters are OCI, but the iota has met with a long random

scratch above it. Testa read: סכ.

9.⁵⁹ This is very indistinct, but even without inverting the piece, the letters appear to be Greek. On the top line a tau or iota is followed by omega and chi. On the bottom line there is probably an epsilon followed by a delta. Testa saw גשה and אמשך.

10.⁶⁰ On this piece, Testa distinguished:

יבם יחך
ב'
יוחשו ייעף בשו

However, the graffito is exceedingly unclear, and it may be possible to read it as a number of different scripts, especially if random scratches are read as being intentional. Greek seems the most likely, since on the bottom line there appear to be mu, omega, psi (made into an Aramaic waw by Testa) and upsilon.

In conclusion, most of the alleged Aramaic graffiti are quite clearly Greek, and among those that are doubtful, it would be presumptuous to suggest that they are Aramaic purely because of their obscurity. It should also be noted that a sherd found under pavement A of the courtyard 6 west of the sala venerata was said by Corbo to be inscribed with "Hebrew" of a Jewish-Christian cultic nature⁶¹. He read, "Purify (the pitcher) of wine, (your) blood, O Yahweh.":

(...את) זק (....)
(....)דמה ין
יה'

could in fact be read, in Aramaic: "(Name) the winemaker;

wine which he squeezed. May it be for good."

זק (קא) (....)
(י"ן דסח ט)
(יהי לטב)

as Strange has pointed out².

Joseph of Tiberias

Nothing in the literary sources would require us to imagine that Capernaum was, prior to the fourth century, anything but an entirely Jewish town. In the excavations on both sides of the dividing wall, no artefacts of a pagan or of a definite Christian nature of any time prior to the fourth century have been discovered. The archaeological remains are therefore consistent with the notion that the town was Jewish. Epiphanius includes Capernaum in his list of Jewish strongholds in which Joseph of Tiberias wished to construct churches (Pan. xxx.11.10).

It seems indisputable that Joseph constructed the "house-church" in Capernaum. Not only does the date of this structure parallel the date of Joseph's building programme (c.337), but the building materials themselves provide added confirmation. This structure was built with a lime pavement, the walls were covered with lime plaster, lime mortar was used to bond the basalt blocks of the new walls and the same lime mortar was employed in

the roof^{ee}. If there is one thing we know from Epiphanius about Joseph's building technique it is that he employed a great deal of lime. Epiphanius tells the story that outside Tiberias Joseph constructed about seven ovens for burning lime. The Jews put a spell on the ovens so that they would not burn properly (sic!); thereby halting his work. Joseph rushed to the ovens with a pitcher of water, on which he traced the sign of the cross, and invoked Jesus' name to cause the water to counteract the sorcery. After this, he sprinkled the water on the ovens and the fire blazed up (Pan. xxx.12.4-8). Lime was clearly essential for his building.

Furthermore, the very idea of building not just a church pure and simple but a "House of Peter" may have been Joseph's. We have already seen how the early church at Nazareth was probably called the "House of Mary". The language used by the Piacenza Pilgrim in regard to the church he saw is very like that which he used to describe the churches at Nazareth: "Also we came to Capernaum, and went into the house of Blessed Peter, which is now a basilica" (Itin. v). One might ask: if Joseph called the churches he built at Nazareth and Capernaum the "houses" of Mary and Peter respectively, did he also call the other churches he constructed, at Sepphoris and Tiberias, "houses" and, if so, why? Interestingly, Egeria reports that at Tiberias there was a church on the site of the house of James and John (Pet. Diac. Lib. V2). She does not say it was the actual house, but "on the spot where

once stood the house of the apostles James and John". This would therefore not contradict Epiphanius' account that Joseph built his church in Tiberias in a corner of the old Hadrianeum (Pan. xxx.12.); the presence of a pagan temple did nothing to dissuade Christians from believing a Christian site lay buried beneath it, and may even have encouraged belief. As in so many instances of early Byzantine churches, the reference by Egeria is the only one we have for this "house". Pilgrims certainly visited Tiberias during the Byzantine period (Theodosius, De Situ ii; Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. vii; Adomnan, De Loc. Sit. 25.1) but none mentions what was there at which to pray. Hugeburc writes that there were a large number of synagogues and churches at Tiberias (Vita Will. xv), but does not describe them. Even more discouraging, in Sepphoris/Diocaesarea there is no specific reference in the literature to a "house" of any kind, only the relics of the flagon and breadbasket of Mary (Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. iv). However, in Theodosius' account (De Situ iv) he mentions that Simon Magus came from Diocaesarea. This may not at first seem significant, but it is in fact quite curious. It is a well-attested tradition in patristic literature that Simon Magus came from Geth or Gitta in Samaria (Justin, Apol. xxvi.6; Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.26.3). Theodosius' belief, as a pilgrim, could very well have derived from the fact that he saw a "House of Simon Magus" in Sepphoris. If there was such a

place, it would have been perfectly in keeping with the interests of Joseph that he should have constructed a "house" of the arch-magician (cf. Acts 8:9-24); Joseph was interested in magic and a practitioner of its (pseudo-)Christian version (see the "lime oven" story above, and Pan. xxx.7.1-8.10; 10.3-8). Later on in Sepphoris there was a church associated with a monastery⁴, but small, quirky, plastered churches covered in pilgrim graffiti have yet to be found in Sepphoris in Tiberias. If ever they are found in these two places, there would be quite good grounds for assigning them to the initiative of Joseph.

Had Joseph chosen to deem his churches to be commemorative of the houses of famous New Testament personages, it would explain too why Joseph was successful in building these shrines. The names would indicate the purpose: he built the churches as pilgrimage centres, "tourist attractions", though he may have hoped that the visitors would effect some conversions among the Jewish populations. In calling a church the "House of Mary" in Nazareth, he must have known that pilgrims would be attracted to the shrine. Furthermore, he would have succeeded in building the churches not simply because he had Constantine's blessing, but because the churches did not seriously threaten the existing Jewish community and, moreover, could be seen as encouraging the influx of wealth. There must have been some reason why the Jewish communities in which he built the churches failed to

muster any significant opposition. An economic reason could provide the key.

It is at this stage that the question of the magnificent limestone synagogue of Capernaum, which stands barely 30 metres away from the "House of Peter" and towers over it, must be considered.

The Question of the Synagogue⁶⁵

The synagogue ruins of Capernaum were first surveyed by E. Robinson in 1857 and partly uncovered by C. Wilson in 1866⁶⁶. After the site became the property of the Franciscans in 1894, Kohl and Watzinger cleared more of the structure⁶⁷ (see Figure 33) and Orfali continued this work⁶⁸. With Corbo and Loffreda in 1969, modern excavations began and are continuing.

The synagogue consists of four elements: a prayer hall (23 x 17.28 m.), a courtyard to the east (23 x 10.8-12.6 m.), a southern porch and a side-room near the north-west corner of the prayer hall. The facade faces south, toward Jerusalem.

The dating of the synagogue has been a source of some controversy. Corbo and Loffreda have held that the Capernaum synagogue should be dated to the fifth century, with the building begun late fourth century and finished middle of the fifth century⁶⁹. The eastern courtyard has been shown to come from the late fifth century on the basis of fifth century pottery and coins dated up to the

reign of Leo 1 (c.A.D.474) found below its pavement⁷⁰. Israeli archaeologists supported an earlier dating, based on the proposal by Kohl and Watzinger, who suggested that the white synagogue was built c.A.D.200 and destroyed in the fourth century⁷¹. B. Meistermann⁷² and Orfali⁷³ attempted to argue that it could be dated to the Herodian period, but no one has recently followed such an early dating. Instead, the Israeli view was that the structure should be placed in the third century, before the triumph of Christianity in the region⁷⁴. Doubts about the integrity of levels excavated under the pavement of the synagogue have been answered by Strange⁷⁵, who notes that the presence of coins and pottery dating from the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth⁷⁶ cannot be countered by an argument that this indicates later reconstruction as the layer of mortar on which the pavement was set was not secondary⁷⁷. The reasons put forward for an earlier date for the synagogue owe much to stylistic considerations⁷⁸, but the refusal to believe that the white synagogue could have been constructed in the fifth century also owes much to historical preconceptions. How could a synagogue tower over a small Christian building like this? As Avi-Yonah wrote:

Such a state of affairs might be conceivable in our ecumenical age, but it seems impossible to imagine that it would have been allowed by the Byzantine authorities of the fourth century."⁷⁹

The same concern is echoed by Shanks:

Can we accept the fact that so magnificent and

richly decorated a synagogue as Capernaum would be allowed to be built so close to a church whose religion was now the state religion?²⁰

This begs the question: how do we know for sure that the Byzantine authorities had absolute power over the Jewish towns of Galilee in the fifth century? In the middle of the fourth century, the programme of Christianisation begun by Constantine was interrupted by the reactionary reign of Julian, who supported the Jews. Jews had already revolted against Gallus Caesar in 351²¹, the result of which ensured Jewish national authority in Galilee²². Despite the promulgation of anti-Jewish laws²³, attacks on synagogues and eventual destruction of the patriarchate, it would appear that Jews continued to exercise authority over their areas²⁴ and built synagogues (Beth Alfa, Hammath Gader, Hammath Tiberias, Husifa, Jericho, Naaran, Maon, Gerasa, Ascalon, Gaza, Azotus, for example)²⁵. The Byzantine economic situation in Palestine was good²⁶ and the early fifth century was something of a boom time. Economic circumstances would have been particularly good in areas such as Capernaum in which there was a constant stream of Christian pilgrims bringing in valuable revenue. One might then suggest that this combination of material prosperity and threat from the Christian legislation may have been a prime reason why the Jews of Capernaum built one of the most beautiful synagogues in Palestine. It should not cause scepticism that they embarked on a project to make their synagogue far outshine²⁷ the Christian structure (at this stage

only the little "domus-ecclesia").

Already, Christians had expressed interest in visiting the synagogue that existed prior to the white synagogue's construction, because of its connection with Jesus' ministry (cf. Mark 1:23). Egeria wrote that in Capernaum, "There is also the synagogue where the Lord cured a man possessed by the devil. The way in is up many stairs, and it is made of dressed stone." (Pet. Diac., Lib. V2). This earlier, black basalt synagogue probably occupied the same spot, and was constructed during the first century²². The new synagogue would have served as a source of pride and esteem in a community now under threat from the Christians, who held authority in the province as a whole. It may well be that the octagonal church was constructed as some recompense, so that the Christians also had a new building.

The contemporaneity of the two buildings is only a problem if we insist that the Christian authorities exercised an effective absolute rule over Capernaum. There is no real evidence to show that they did. The situation may well have been quite the inverse; only this would account for the archaeological evidence. The Jewish authorities of Capernaum permitted the construction of a small Christian pilgrimage site. With the new wealth they received from the influx of Christian tourists, and with a desire to promote Jewish religion and culture in an age in which it was threatened, they

undertook, by means of contributions from the community, the construction of an elegant limestone synagogue that would indeed tower over the Christian structure.

To conclude, it is probable that Joseph of Tiberias bought insula 1 around the time of the death of Constantine in 337, when he began building small Christian churches in four Jewish towns. He managed to convince the Jewish authorities that his proposition would be little threat, perhaps even that it would be politic given the religious persuasions of the emperor, and that it would provide extra income for the town. The old dwellings of the insula were renovated to accommodate Christian visitors and to provide a focus for prayer, even though it would have been an unusual, small and unassuming church where perhaps only a few clergy ministered to its upkeep. As with Nazareth, Christians were guided to the Jewish synagogue as well.

From this survey of the archaeological evidence of Capernaum, it seems very unlikely that Jewish-Christians venerated a room or house that was the genuine site of Simon Peter's dwelling. If there was some memory of the site of the actual house, then it may have been part of the folk traditions of the town rather than because an active group of Jewish-Christians lived there. If Jewish-Christians did live in Capernaum past the first century, they have left no traces.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCE

A: LITERARY AND INSCRIPTIONAL MATERIAL

A number of literary artefacts discovered in recent years have been interpreted to provide evidence of Jewish-Christians in Palestine. There is no need to spend long in discussing these. Mancini lists three literary items in his summary of archaeological discoveries relative to the Jewish-Christians as being significant: the letter of Bar Kochba to Yeshua; a letter found at Khirbet el-Mird from a certain Gabriel; and a booklet discovered in the Kidron Valley¹. Mancini goes on to suggest that an inscription found in Syria is "Jewish-Christian"²; this shall also be considered here.

The Letter of Bar Kochba

In 1952, a letter from Bar Kochba was discovered in one of the caves at Wadi Murabba'at, near the Dead Sea. It was written on fine quality papyrus, and addressed to a man named Yeshua. There is a tear on the right side which deletes some significant letters. J. T. Milik published the letter in 1953³, transcribing it as:

ופסק מן הגללים שהצלתם כל אדם
שאני נתן חכבלים ברגלכם כמה
שעסתי לבן עפלול⁴

which he translated, "si tu ne cesses pas (tes relations) avec les Galileens que tu as tous tiré d'affaire, je vais mettre des fers à vos pieds, comme je l'ai fait à Ben 'Aphlul."⁵. This, he argued, provided evidence of Jewish-Christians in Palestine during the second century. Testa went on to develop Milik's ideas⁶, arguing that this was evidence of the term "Galileans" being used pejoratively to refer to Jewish-Christians, as early as the second century.

Milik's position was effectively challenged by Y. Yadin⁷, who read the first word here as תְּרַבֵּץ, translating the passage as: "mobilise from the Galileans whom I have saved (or whom you have saved) everyone; for (otherwise) I shall put irons on your feet as I did to Ben 'Aphlul." This caused Milik to change his mind in favour of Yadin's translation. Contrary to what Mancini reports, Milik does not grant that his original theory "is not less satisfactory,"⁸ but Milik says precisely the opposite, "l'hypothèse des judéo-chrétiens ...est moins satisfaisante" (my underline)⁹. He accepts that the letter contains a threat of imprisonment if Yeshua continues to harm the Galileans. If the Galileans were on the side of Bar Kochba, it is very unlikely that they were Christians, whom Bar Kochba persecuted (Justin Martyr, Apol. 1.31, PG 6, 376). Furthermore, "Galileans" was not a name for Christians during this period, but for an obscure Jewish group mentioned by Justin (Dial.

lxxx.4) and Hegesippus (Hist. Eccles. iv.22.7). The first person to call Christians "Galileans" was the Emperor Julian, as Mancini himself admits¹⁰. The Jewish-Christian interpretation is supported only by the Bagatti-Testa school.

The Letter of Gabriel and the Booklet from the Kidron Valley

In 1953, a Belgian archaeological mission digging at Khirbet el-Mird discovered an inscription and a letter written in the Palestinian Syriac (also known as Christo-Palestinian Aramaic, or Syro-Palestinian) script. It is from a monk named Gabriel who calls himself a sinner, and is addressed to the superior of the laura, probably of nearby Kastellion. It was published first by J. T. Milik, who changed his mind concerning the dating and the reading of a key line; in his article of 1953¹¹ Milik dated it to the seventh century, and in 1961¹² to the eighth to tenth century.

However, neither the dating nor the content of the letter are of any real importance to the Bagatti-Testa school; it is the script itself which excites interest. For example, Mancini writes:

This brief note ... provides evidence of the use of the ancient Aramaic language. It can be connected with the symbols, inscriptions and other archaeological documents to form a link in the chain which proves that Aramaic was used in Palestine, that it was the language of Judaeo-Christians and that it lived on in various places in Palestine and Transjordan until the times of the High Middle Ages.¹³

One is really quite unsure why this is as significant as Mancini appears to think. Since Aramaic was the language of Palestine in the first century, it is probable that Jesus and his followers spoke Aramaic, and that the Jewish-Christian churches of the land also spoke Aramaic. With Palestinian Syriac we appear to have a modified continuation of the non-Jewish dialect of the country. This says nothing at all about any continuation of Jewish-Christianity.

The same may be said of the booklet discovered, also by the Belgians, in the Kidron Valley in 1935¹⁴, which was dated to the sixth or seventh century. It contains magical formulae to combat evil and recipes for the making of inks, and appears to have come from a Christian monastery¹⁵.

Mancini considers that the two writings, "show that amongst the monks of Palestine there were some who had been brought up on Jewish Christian culture"¹⁶. It is hard to imagine how Mancini (and Bagatti¹⁷) could conclude this on the basis of a mere continuity of broad language type. Had the writings been in Hebrew the case would be quite different.

One would guess that the unstated foundation for the speculations by Mancini is the work of scholars in the early years of this century, who thought that the source of Syro-Palestinian was the dialect used by Jews in Palestine originally written in the square Hebrew

characters¹⁸ and that at the end of the fourth century Jewish converts to Christianity borrowed the Estrangela script for their language. The squareness of the Syro-Palestinian script was therefore explained by its having its origins in the square Jewish script¹⁹.

Aided by considerably more epigraphic material than was available to scholars at the turn of the century, recent studies on Palestinian Syriac leave no doubt that it has nothing to do with Jewish-Christianity²⁰. It was a language used by the monks and hermits of the Judaeen wilderness during the Byzantine period and probably widely employed as the vernacular of the land. This Aramaic spoken in Palestine at the time Egeria arrived was known as "Syriac" (Egeria, Itin. xlvii.3). It was given that name either because the characters used to write it looked like Estrangela script or else it sounded like Syriac to Latin and Greek speakers. It was, like Syriac proper, a dialect of Aramaic but it appears to have been held in low esteem, so that it never became a literary language of any merit. Greek was the official language of the church in Palestine, and of the educated. Jerome calls the vernacular "gibberish" (Jerome, Ep. vii.2) but elsewhere notes that at the funeral of Paula psalms were sung in Greek, Latin and "Syriac", Ep. cviii.30). The low esteem of the vernacular in Jewish regions is found in rabbinic writings, where the rabbis express the opinion that it would be better if the people spoke Greek. Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel would permit

scriptural texts to be written only in Hebrew or Greek (m. Meg. 1:8). Rabbi Judah I is credited with saying: "In the Land of Israel, why use this Syrian language? Either the Holy Tongue or Greek" (b. Baba Kamma 83a).

The widespread Aramaic of the first century split into various distinct dialects from the third to eighth centuries: into a western wing of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic, Samaritan Aramaic and Christian Syro-Palestinian Aramaic; and into an eastern wing of Syriac (Jacobite and Nestorian), Babylonian Talmudic Aramaic and Mandaic²¹. Naveh points out that the type of characters used for any given dialect does not tell us much about its relationship with other dialects; for example, the Jewish Aramaic dialect of the Babylonian Talmud was written in the "square" characters developed by the Jews in Palestine, and Samaritan Aramaic was written in the "Samaritan" script, which was an offshoot of the paleo-Hebrew script²². Very different characters could be used for language types which were very close. The "squareness" of the Syro-Palestinian script, even if it is conclusively shown to have been influenced by Jewish script (which is doubtful), cannot therefore be used as evidence to argue for the origins of the people who used the dialect. Desreumaux, moreover, sees the letters "sous une influence des formes grecques, ce qui lui donnerait son caractère si délibérément horizontal et géométrique."²³. With the demographical changes that

followed the failure of the Bar Kochba revolt, new immigrants from Syria and neighbouring regions appear to have altered the Aramaic language of Palestine. Christian domination and immigration from the fourth century onwards undoubtedly modified it further. Metzger has argued that Palestinian Syriac is indeed much closer to Palestinian Aramaic than to Syriac proper²⁴, but this does not mean that the people who spoke it were Jewish converts. It would be wrong to assume that Gentile pagans only spoke Greek; Eusebius grew up in Caesarea knowing Greek and "Syriac"²⁵. It was not a language that derived from the Syriac of new Christian immigrants, but one which arose from a conglomeration of Palestinian antecedents.

Desreumaux has dated Syro-Palestinian inscriptions and documents to between the fifth and twelfth centuries²⁶. The late date is due to conservative tendencies which preserved the language long after it had been superseded by Arabic. Towards the end of its life as a language it was influenced by Syriac and Arabic²⁷, but it remained distinct. Unlike most scholars in the field, Desreumaux has argued that the language came in from outside Palestine. M. Bar Asher, who is at present compiling a dictionary of Syro-Palestinian, distinguishes between two different language strata: the first from the sixth to eighth centuries, in which foreign features are very limited, and the second of the tenth to thirteenth centuries, when it is no longer a living language, but a

language of worship used only in churches and monasteries²⁸. With Desmeuroux and many others, he considers that in this latter period it was subject to influence from Syriac and Arabic, and employed (exclusively?) by the Melkites²⁹.

All this demonstrates that it would be foolish to place any reliance on Palestinian Syriac texts to argue for the existence of Jewish-Christians. There is today a lively interest in the Palestinian Syriac dialect and script, which is invigorated by frequent new discoveries of inscriptions in Israel and Jordan³⁰. Specialists in the field today find no Jewish-Christian connections.

The Tafas Inscription

Mancini follows A. Alt's suggestion³¹ that a Greek inscription found in Tafas which mentions a "synagogue" may in fact have been written by Jewish-Christians rather than by Jews (Frey, CIJ II, no. 861), since Ebionites referred to their meeting places as "synagogues", according to Epiphanius (Pan. xxx.18.1), and Tafas is in the general region in which Kochaba of the Ebionites might have ^{possibly} been located³². The inscription reads:

ΙΑΚΩΒΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΕΜΟΥΗΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ

ΚΛΗΜΑΤΙΟΣ ΠΑΤΗΡ ΑΥΤΩΝ

ΤΗΝ ΚΥΝΑΓΟΓΗΝ ΟΙΚΟΔΟΜΗΣ

"Jacob and Semouel (=Samuel) and Clematios, their father,

built (this) synagogue." Most scholars, including Frey³³, find the Jewish-Christian interpretation unlikely, and favour a Jewish reading. Perhaps a case may even be made for it being Marcionite, since in the same region an inscription was discovered that recorded a "synagogue of Marcionites"³⁴. A reading that would understand Jacob (Mancini gives the name as "James"), Samuel and Clematios to be Jews would, however, be the most straightforward option.

In conclusion, none of these literary or inscriptional pieces of evidence can be ascribed to Jewish-Christians.

B. AMULETS

A number of amulets have been ascribed to Jewish-Christians by the Testa-Bagatti school³⁵ because, according to Mancini, they "express ideas which definitely belong to this (Jewish-Christian) current of thought"³⁶. Bagatti thought it was a particularly Jewish-Christian practice to place amulets with the dead to speed their passing into the next world³⁷. However, Bagatti was wrong to assume that amulets were placed with the dead for this purpose. An amulet worn by the person before death was buried with the corpse. Amulets were used by a large number of people in the ancient world as

protection against various diseases and misfortunes, and cannot be linked with any one religious group.

The major weakness of Bagatti's view is that a Jewish-Christian "current of thought" is impossible to distinguish³⁸. Moreover, amulets frequently display forms of religious belief that do not fall into simple categories. As with all magic in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine world, charms and amulets display a "frank syncretism", as Goodenough has pointed out³⁹. Since Jewish magic was renowned in antiquity, the name of the Jewish God, transliterated as $\bar{\iota}\alpha\omicron$ in Greek⁴⁰, was the most commonly employed deity, but an amulet containing an appeal to $\bar{\iota}\alpha\omicron$ need not have been Jewish. A magician claimed to know the secrets (including signs and languages) of many religions and to be able to communicate with a variety of gods, demons and other spirits⁴¹. An amulet which contains both Jewish and Christian motifs is therefore not necessarily Jewish-Christian (cf. PGM IV.3007-86) and an amulet written in Hebrew or Aramaic letters is not necessarily Jewish (cf. PGM IV.1331-89). Even if an amulet is Jewish, the type of religious belief displayed is rarely that of which most of the rabbis would have approved⁴². Examinations of ancient magic provide an insight into the cross-fertilisation of cultures and religions. The syncretistic character of magic should be borne in mind in any analysis of a given amulet or charm. It would appear that the Bagatti-Testa school has failed to grasp the

fundamental nature of magical items in its attempt to classify some of these as "Jewish-Christian".

The Emmaus (or Amwas) Amulet⁴³ (Figure 34)

This amulet was found in a tomb from the Maccabean period in 1896, and was subsequently purchased by the United States Vice-Consul of the time, Herbert Clark, but it appears no longer to be in existence⁴⁴. Vincent published a drawing of the amulet and an interpretation in 1908⁴⁵ and his drawing is the sole evidence modern scholars can rely upon for a reading of the piece. The inscription, written in Aramaic, was read by Vincent as:

1. משג אל שמראלה אלהא ו(כל)
2. (נ)סיכיא קדישיה בטלון כל הבר מן
3. (ע)ינוי מן נוהרה מן רישה מן גידוי(י...)
4. (ר)ופיא בשס
5. ומן אוזנוי ומן בציה ו....

Testa, on the other hand, believes the eighth letter of the first line is not resh but dalet. The demon being referred to is Shamadel which he thinks means "apostasy from God". The Aramaic root ש מ ד, in Pael, means "cause to apostasise"⁴⁶ and שמדאל could certainly have been a plausible name of a demon, though שמדא means "persecution"⁴⁷. Testa provides two alternative names: Sameodon and Asmode'y, but the latter does not derive from the root ש מ ד but from the Persian Aeshma or Aeshmadao⁴⁸. It is difficult to know quite why any of

this should be pertinent to Jewish-Christians. Testa thinks that a he, emphasising the number five, might be significant, along with the many magical symbols, but does not argue for any definite Christian associations, only for esoteric "Jewish-Christian" ones which may as easily be representative of a type of speculative Jewish thought quite unrelated to Christianity.

Recently, Naveh and Shaked have re-examined this amulet and read it as:⁴⁹

1-2 magic figures

3 (מ)שג־אל שמראל אלהא אתון

4 כרק (ט)יריא קדישיה בטלון כל (ח)

5 מן עינוי מן נוחרה מן רישה מן גידוי

6 מן ריסיא בשם magic figures

7 ...ומן נוי ומן בניה...

1-2 (magic characters)

3 ... Masagiel, Samriel, the God (... You)

4 holy (charac)ters, annul all (the ...)

5 (from) his eyes, from his nostril, from his head,
from his tendon(s)

6 (from the eye)lids. In the name of (magic figures)

7 ... and from ... and from her sons.

They agree with Vincent's reading of the first names of the angel, and identify a second. The name Masagiel is found in the Sefer ha-Razim (vi.14) and in its Greek form in a number of amulets⁵⁰. Clearly, there is nothing here

that is in any way Jewish-Christian.

The Beirut Amulets

An amulet written in Greek was found in an undated tomb in Beirut and sent to the Museum of the Louvre in 1900. It was studied by A. Héron de Villefosse⁵¹, who established that its purpose was to protect a woman named Alexandra against the devil. It ends with an exorcism. The amulet lists the names of various angels and powers which hold sway over seven heavens, along with those that control meteorological and geological features, which perhaps shows an influence from Gnosticism or even a form of pagan religion, but there is no doubt that the piece is fundamentally Christian in character. There is an appeal to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and "his Christ". Bagatti thought it was Jewish-Christian because the idea of the seven heavens was, he mistakenly thought, an exclusively Jewish-Christian concept⁵².

A second amulet from Beirut (Figure 35), found in 1925 by Charles Virolleaud, is perhaps one of the more interesting to be discovered. It is written in the Estrangela script of Syriac and is 21 lines long. Unfortunately, it is now lost, and scholars must rely on two photographs published by A. Dupont-Sommer⁵³. Dupont-Sommer arrived at the conclusion that the amulet expressed Gnostic speculation on the letter waw. Testa

has re-interpreted his conclusions to argue that this is a Jewish-Christian concept⁵⁴. Already, however, in 1949 C. H. Gordon determined that the initial word waw was in fact an exclamation⁵⁵. The amulet probably reads: ⁵⁶

1 ⲕⲟⲓ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲓⲁⲕⲁⲧ
2 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲓⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
3 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
4 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
5 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
6 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
7 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
8 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
9 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
10 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
11 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
12 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
13 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
14 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
15 ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲙⲁⲕⲁ
...


It may be seen that the exhortion ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲓⲁⲕⲁ in the first line corresponds to ⲙⲁⲕⲁ ⲓⲁⲕⲁ in the eleventh. Naveh and Shaked follow Gordon in considering both these to read: "O Bar-Theon"⁵⁷ reading the latter part not as "Fils de Théos", as Dupont-Sommer suggested, but as a name. Certainly, Dupont-Sommer quite failed to find any problem in the suggestion that some Syriac-speaking Christians apparently considered God's

name to be "Theos" (and declinable?), according to his interpretation. It is not the usual expression used for "Son of God" in Syriac, which is ܐܠܗܐ ܒܝܬ (Mark 1:1). The cross at the beginning of the inscription may be some attempt by the writer to utilise Christian associations, but this does not necessarily mean we have here a Christian amulet. The deity Bar-Theon is only one of three divine beings referred to in lines 1-2. The second is called "Mighty Lord" (ܡܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ) and the third the "Holy One of God" (ܐܠܗܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ) ⁵⁸ cf. ܐܠܗܐ ܕܡܠܝܚܐ (Mark 1:24). While these may have associations with Christ, the powers have the functions of controlling the waters of chaos under the world, which is not a messianic function.

In Dupont-Sommer's reading the three powers appear to be four: "la Grande Vertu de l'Océan et des Archontes, l'Eau et la Monde". Naveh and Shaked interpret the amulet to be an appeal to loosen the demon Tarpas-dukh from the sea, also appealing to another deity Aqem Zabaoth⁵⁹. If they are correct, it is extremely unlikely that this amulet, designed as a curse, would be Jewish-Christian. Even given Dupont-Sommer's speculation on the waw and his reading, a Jewish-Christian interpretation is strained.

The Aleppo Amulet (Figure 36)

This Aramaic amulet was found at the beginning of the century in Aleppo and bought by Fr. Giacinto Tonizza. It is now kept in the museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, and was studied in depth by M. Schwab in 1906⁶⁰. It is written in Aramaic. Bagatti and Testa have considered it to be Jewish-Christian⁶¹, but there is no very good reason to suppose this to be true. As Naveh and Shaked have read it, the amulet is one of the more definitely Jewish examples in existence, with references to Yah, Shaddai, Yahweh, the Name of God, the God of Israel, the angel Ramiel and King David, as well as a biblical reference to Job 38:13), and no syncretistic elements.

To those who are unfamiliar with magical signs, the symbol  in line 8 may suggest a reference to Christ. There are also numerous chi crosses and other signs which could, given no knowledge of magical symbols and letters, lead the uninitiated to the conclusion that the piece is, despite its inscription and lack of reference to Christ, a Christian piece of some kind. This has clearly misled Bagatti and Testa. The chi cross is common in magical texts and amulets⁶² and is frequently employed with circles at its extremities⁶³. It is found in this form in this very amulet. Not every extremity need have a circle, sometimes only one⁶⁴. If this circle happens to have been drawn on the top left extremity, then the sign would

resemble a chi-rho. The same is true for ordinary crosses, which appear as magical signs without circles⁶⁵, with circles⁶⁶ and with just one circle⁶⁷. ⲕ was also understood as a combination of the letters tau and rho, being an abbreviation for ⲧⲣⲓⲁⲕⲟⲛⲓⲁ ⁶⁸, the number thirty. It is also found on coins of the third year of the reign of Herod the Great⁶⁹ (ⲕ for ⲧⲣⲓⲥ).

There are a number of cryptic letters from lines 20 to 23 of the inscription which would suggest that a magical alphabet is being employed, but few magical alphabets have been successfully interpreted so far⁷⁰, and consequently this remains undeciphered. The sign Ⲑ appears to form part of the alphabet, since the letter Ⲑ is found on its own in line 8.

This piece therefore does not show any indication of having been used by Christians or Jewish-Christians.

The Horseman Amulets

In the Museum of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem, an amulet is exhibited which is identified as Jewish-Christian⁷¹. It depicts a horseman with a halo spearing a woman on the ground and has the inscription: $\text{ⲉⲓϢ ⲑⲉⲐϢ ⲟ ⲛⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲧⲁ ⲕⲁⲕⲁ}$. It gains its Jewish-Christian identification from Bagatti's conclusions about the nature of the imagery⁷². However, this is a common type of amulet used to protect women in childbirth. It made its appearance in a Jewish ambience⁷³, and was adopted by

Samaritans⁷⁴ and by Christians⁷⁵. The latter identified the horseman as St. Sisinnius and the woman as Gyllou. The amulet on display in the museum is of the Christian type, and is not a sectarian Jewish-Christian piece.

There is consequently no reason to accept any of the identifications offered for these amulets by the Bagatti-Testa school. Many other small finds have been considered to be Jewish-Christian by the school but there is no need to consider them all in this study. On the basis of the sample we have examined here, it is very likely that these also will turn out to be Jewish or Christian rather than Jewish-Christian.

CONCLUSION

This study has both negative and positive results. In the case of the Bagatti-Testa hypothesis, a detailed analysis of the principal theories of the school has shown that Jewish-Christians did not keep safe the memory of certain Christian holy sites by continued use and veneration of these places.

It was considered important at the outset to establish a precise definition of who the historical Jewish-Christians really were, and we began with an examination of this question. Jewish-Christians, it was argued, ^{above} were practising Jews who believed in Jesus as Messiah. These Jewish-Christians observed Jewish customs and festivals, circumcised their sons, kept the food laws, honoured the Sabbath day and so on. The important part of being a Jewish-Christian was the upholding of Jewish praxis, not simply ethnicity or theology.

Whilst the Church as a whole originated within the Jewish community, and at first felt no conflict between the maintenance of a Jewish life-style and a belief that Jesus was the Messiah, by the beginning of the second century the situation had greatly changed. This was partly as a result of the popularity of Pauline teaching on the matter of Jewish law and partly as a result of the temple tax legislation of A.D.96, whereby people had to chose whether or not they were, religiously, Jews and

therefore liable to pay the tax. The growing hostility of the Jewish community towards the Christians among them aided the process of separation and the abandonment of a Jewish life-style among Jews who were Christian believers.

Certain groups, a minority, maintained Jewish praxis. These groups were called "Ebionites" by Church Fathers who sought to classify them under this term as an heretical sect. At the beginning, the term may have been used by one particular group who formed the antithesis of the Marcionite sect, but it soon came to refer to all Christians who followed Jewish customs. Some of these later groups, and perhaps the original Ebionites, may not have been ethnically Jewish, but rather "Judaizing" in seeking to introduce the maintenance of Jewish customs in churches which had long abandoned these, or had never observed them in the first place. A Jewish-Christian theology is impossible to trace in the groups classified as Ebionite (or sometimes as Nazoraean) by the Church Fathers. It may be possible to distinguish elements of the theology of groups following Peter or James in the New Testament writings, but the first-century conflicts of theological outlook appear not to have continued into the second in any significant way; at least, not so that we can distinguish "Jewish" and "Gentile" streams of theology which flow from the earliest communities in a continuous unbroken

current. It is very likely indeed that Jewish-Christian groups embraced a wide-ranging spectrum of theological beliefs, from Gnostic to broadly orthodox.

In identifying archaeological material as Jewish-Christian on the basis of a definition of Jewish-Christianity which stresses race and theology above praxis, the Bagatti-Testa school has wrongly attributed this material. Furthermore, in seeking to argue for the earliest possible veneration of many significant Christian holy places, the school has used literary and archaeological material carelessly. Sometimes, as in the case of the Khirbet Kilkish steles, the school has been misled into believing the authenticity of archaeological forgeries. The error was then compounded by a faulty identification of a Gnostic group, identified by Epiphanius as heretical, as being Jewish-Christians. The identification of certain ossuaries as being Jewish-Christian on the basis of cross-shaped markings and names reminiscent of New Testament personages has likewise been generally considered to have been erroneous. The propensity of the Bagatti-Testa school to fall into these traps of identification is partly the result of their methodology. It would appear that the very idea that Jewish-Christians with a distinct theology lived in Palestine in some numbers, and kept the memory of sacred places alive, was so convincing to the Bagatti-Testa school that it seemed impossible that there should be no material evidence to prove the existence of these Jewish-

Christians. The views of the school owed much to the studies of Cardinal Daniélou, and Daniélou himself used its studies to confirm his own ideas; these examinations became self-perpetuating and mutually confirming.

A deductive approach which begins with a particular model and tests the evidence against it has been rejected in the present study in favour of an empirical approach. The historical examination began with a look at the religious demography of third-century Palestine. In general, it would appear that Jews were concentrated in Galilee, Samaritans in a "strip" around Mount Gerizim, and Christians in the cosmopolitan cities and a few southern villages. The largest population group appears to have been pagan. The pagans lived throughout the country, mainly in an urban environment, as well as in the Negev, Nabataea, east of the Jordan River, the Bashan and Hermon areas, northern Galilee and along the coast. All populations mixed in the great cities of the coast and elsewhere.

Evidence of Jewish-Christians was not found. Rabbinic literature shows that there was conflict between the rabbis and minim, but these were not Jewish-Christians. The minim of Capernaum were not Christians of any kind, but Jews considered lax by the rabbis. Patristic evidence seems to place Jewish-Christians throughout the Empire, but especially in the region around Damascus in Syria. There may be some

archaeological evidence for Jewish-Christian groups in the Golan, but this is as yet inconclusive.

There is a complete absence of literary references to Jewish-Christian groups in the centre of Palestine, and therefore it seems unlikely that they were present to maintain the veneration of sites. Moreover, it is very doubtful that Palestinian Christians of other kinds had any real interest in venerating significant Biblical sites, although they were clearly interested in pointing them out to Christian visitors to the land. There is an important difference between being interested in a site as an educated visitor (undertaking an historia), and venerating a piece of sanctified ground by praying there as a pilgrim. Christians appear to have had no interest in the sanctification of the material land of Palestine, or any part of it, before Constantine.

With the changes wrought by the first Christian emperor came the origins of Christian sacred places and the beginnings of Christian pilgrimage. Jews had once had a holy place par excellence in the Temple on Mount Moriah, and Samaritans had their temple on Mount Gerizim. Both groups had places of significance and lesser holiness in the form of tombs and geographical features at which one might say a blessing. In the main, however, it was the pagans whose many religious acts required pilgrimage to sacred places and the veneration of such sites as holy in themselves. The entire Roman Empire, including the land of Palestine, was peppered with sacred

zones and had been for thousands of years. Many Jews and Samaritans themselves appear to have participated in cult festivals at such holy sites, probably despite "official" disapproval; this was the case at Mamre. Festivals around sacred places were a powerful force in the preservation of pagan cult.

Constantine waged a war against paganism. He destroyed a great many pagan sanctuaries and temples, and turned laws around that had previously attacked the Church. He set about a programme of Christianisation, and sought to stamp out paganism in Palestine. He wished to create Christian holy sites which would supersede pagan shrines. Christian pilgrimage began with the visit of the emperor's mother Helena to Palestine in order to "re-discover" the holiest sites of Christendom. Soon Christians claimed many sites which had previously been important only to pagans, Jews or Samaritans. Anything which had a Biblical association could be "restored" to the hands of God's elect in order to have a church built on the place which could attract a new generation of now Christian pilgrims. This was what happened at Mamre, where Constantine himself ordered that a church should be constructed.

The Bagatti-Testa school claims that the other three Constantinian sites of Bethlehem, Golgotha and the cave commemorating the Ascension on the Mount of Olives were all venerated by Jewish-Christians prior to the fourth

century. In Bethlehem, the archaeology tells us little, but the literary sources would indicate that the grove and cave of Tammuz-Adonis was established in the middle of the second century. At about the same time, a highly symbolic Christian story arose which located the birth of Christ in a cave in the desert outside Bethlehem. By the end of the third century, these traditions had been amalgamated so that the pagan cave was identified as the birthplace of Christ. It was then an easy target for appropriation at the beginning of the fourth century.

In the case of Golgotha, the site of Jesus' death was probably remembered by the Jerusalem community, although there is no evidence whatsoever to suggest that they venerated it. Golgotha had been a quarry in the Iron Age but was used in the first century as a Roman execution place. There were tombs and, probably, gardens nearby. The tombs were emptied when Agrippa II included the region within the city by constructing the Third Wall; it was for this reason that Constantine's builders discovered an empty tomb, which they identified as that of Christ. The area had been covered by a temple of Venus-Astarte, and the construction of a Christian holy place on the spot served many purposes. It is perhaps fortuitous, under the circumstances, that the site is most likely to be genuine. The outcrop of rock on which was erected the statue of Venus-Astarte had been thought of as the actual locality of Jesus' crucifixion by certain Christians, though it took some time before this

view became the standard one. A cave cut into the rock's eastern side, identified by the Bagatti-Testa school as being Jewish-Christian, was actually created in the seventh century. It owed its creation to speculation and stories about the tomb of Adam being located under the cross on which Christ died.

Likewise, the cave of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives was identified as important under the influence of an apocryphal story, this time of a Gnostic nature. The orthodox church of Jerusalem sought to negate this identification by placing the site of the Ascension further up the hill, so that the cave became the site of Christ's teaching before his death and not of the initiation of his disciples into secret mysteries immediately prior to his Ascension.

The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis makes much of the idea of the "mystic grotto", which it suggests was a Jewish-Christian concept. Many caves later used by Christians as holy places are considered by the school to have been once Jewish-Christian. Our examination has shown this to be unlikely. Caves were used by pagans, for mysteries, and also by Jews, for magic, but there is no evidence that Christians of any kind employed caves in Palestine as meeting places. Caves were very often used for agricultural purposes. This was the case for the Bethany cave and the cave of Gethsemane. The former was a cistern until its creation as a holy place (the guest-

room of Martha and Mary) in the fourth century. The latter was an olive processing works until it was appropriated by the Church. In the case of Gethsemane, it is very likely indeed that this was where Jesus and his disciples actually took shelter, but as with the case of Golgotha, there is nothing to suggest that Christians considered it hallowed ground even though the name of the locality was preserved and the site was correctly identified.

Mount Zion was an area of ruins at the beginning of the fourth century. The Jerusalem community built for itself the magnificent Church of Holy Zion on a site they claimed was that of the first apostolic church of Jerusalem. However, despite their claims, archaeological excavation of the region would not confirm these as being probable. The area was the most affluent in first-century Jerusalem, which would make it unlikely that the primitive community met here. Walls and a niche considered by the Bagatti-Testa school to come from a Jewish-Christian synagogue-church in fact derive from the Byzantine structure.

Lastly in Jerusalem, the Tomb of Mary was built in the fifth century, and had no Jewish-Christian origins. It appears to have been created to satisfy the expectations of pilgrims familiar with apocryphal stories about the death of Mary.

The two most extensively excavated Franciscan sites in Galilee, Nazareth and Capernaum, have also been found

to have no Jewish-Christian foundations. Both towns were Jewish. They were each provided with a small pilgrim church in the fourth century by Count Joseph of Tiberias, who though a Jew who converted to Christianity, was not a sectarian Jewish-Christian. He wished to encourage Christian belief in the Jewish heartland, and appears to have convinced the Jews of Nazareth and Capernaum that it would be prudent to allow Christians to visit.

In the case of Nazareth, the so-called Jewish-Christian synagogue-church is in fact the structure built by Joseph, and nothing would suggest that the area was venerated prior to this time. Graffiti on the walls of this church are indicative of Christian visitors from throughout the Empire. The same is true for the graffiti of Capernaum. The alleged Jewish-Christian house-church there is also the work of Joseph of Tiberias. Lime floors which may date from the third century, found on part of a room in this structure, are most likely indicative of affluence and not of veneration.

In both Nazareth and Capernaum the Jewish community permitted an influx of Christian pilgrims, and pandered to them, for the sake of revenue. Proof of the economic boom afforded by these circumstances is shown in the splendid limestone synagogue that the Jewish community was able to build in Capernaum in the fifth century.

Finally, it must be added that miscellaneous

literary material and certain amulets deemed by the Bagatti-Testa school to be Jewish-Christian are either Jewish or Christian.

The Bagatti-Testa hypothesis concerning Jewish-Christians and the origins of Christian holy places is therefore false. Christian holy places had various beginnings. Some were sites long identified as being where Biblical events took place. These then came to be venerated for the first time, on the pagan model, in the fourth century. Some of these sites were probably genuine, Golgotha and Gethsemane, for example. The identifications of these places had been preserved by the the Jerusalem community. Some of the sites were identified in the third century after popular apocryphal stories took hold of the imaginations of local Christians and visitors: the cave of the Ascension, for example, or the Bethlehem cave. Apocryphal stories continued to exert an active influence in the formation of later holy sites, like the Tomb of Mary or the cave of Adam in the Rock of Calvary. Many sites were pagan, Jewish or Samaritan and were appropriated when the Church was given new powers by Constantine: Mamre, Bethlehem and Golgotha, for example, among many others like the site of the temple in Ein Karim, or the Bethesda sanctuary. Some places were created as sanctified sites ex nihilo, like the Bethany cave. Since it lay on the probable route to the Lazarium at Bethany, it must have been considered a good place for a shrine.

In Galilee, the instrument of the establishment of holy places was Joseph of Tiberias, who acted with the blessing of Constantine. He provided churches for pilgrims to visit in Nazareth, Capernaum, Tiberias and Sepphoris, though only his structures in the former two towns have been excavated.

The idea of the Christian holy place therefore began in the fourth century with the innovations of the Emperor Constantine. It is his figure that looms large over the course of events which led to the establishment of hundreds of holy sites and churches in Palestine throughout the Byzantine period. Christian pilgrimage began in the wake of his innovations, and not before, though Christians had visited the land prior to this time. The concept of the holy place was basically pagan, but one which had strong resonances in Jewish and Samaritan practice. The holiness of land, however small, was not in essence a Christian concept. Nevertheless, by the sixth century Palestine as a whole was considered to be imbued with the aura of the divine; it became the Holy Land, vouchsafed to the care of God's chosen, the Christians, for ever. This was something worth fighting for, and would lead the way to the door of the Middle Ages and the Crusades.

The idea of the holy place is dangerously close to idolatry. The intermixture of the physical and the divine is a powerful one which lies at the heart of

strong passions about the ownership of the region to this day. The concept has found its way to the modern Christian, Jewish and Muslim consciousness. The idea of sanctified places, to which pilgrims might come to pray, cannot, however, be found in Christian teaching prior to Constantine, and certainly not in any Jewish-Christian "theology" that might be traced back to the very origins of the Church.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. It should be noted at the outset that the Bagatti-Testa school's views should not be equated with those of all the members of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem. The Studium is made up of scholars of various opinions. It engages in a broad spectrum of Biblical and archaeological work. Its library acts as a focus for scholars from all over the world and its journal, the Liber Annuus, provides a forum for exciting debate.

2. See for a summary: B. Bagatti, The Church from the Circumcision, Eng. transl. by E. Hoade of an Italian manuscript published with amendments as Alle origini della chiesa 1: Le comunità giudeo-cristiane (Vatican City, 1981), Jerusalem, 1971 (repr. 1984), pp.3-14. As with many of the publications from the Franciscan Printing Press in Jerusalem, the book is found in several languages. The first to appear was the French edition: L'Eglise de la Circoncision, transl. by A. Storme in 1965. It will be noted that the Italian edition, from the original manuscript, was the last to appear. For expediency, in this study, the English versions will be used when available. The history of the Jewish-Christians, according to the Bagatti-Testa school, is also found in J. Briand, The Judeo-Christian Church of Nazareth, transl. by M. Deuel of L'Eglise Judéo-Chrétienne de Nazareth (Jerusalem, 1979), Jerusalem, 1982, pp.10-17.

3. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.10.

4. B. Bagatti, "Le origini delle tradizioni dei luoghi santi in Palestina," LA 14, 1964, pp.32-64, at p.33.

5. E. Testa, "Le Grotte dei Misteri giudeo-cristiane," LA 14, 1964, pp.65-144; idem, "Le grotte mistiche dei Nazarenie i loro riti battesimali", LA 12, 1962, pp.5-45.

6. Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.137-236; E. Testa, Il Simbolismo dei Giudeo-Cristiani, Jerusalem, 1962, repr. 1982.

7. The term "pagans" is used for want of a better word to refer to persons who did not worship the Jewish/Samaritan/Christian (and later Muslim) God, but worshipped instead one or some of a diverse plethora of different local deities and/or those of the Graeco-Roman pantheon. Sometimes the local deities were identified with the Graeco-Roman gods, and sometimes not. There was

no unified religious system that can be defined under the term "paganism"; it is simply what is not Jewish, Samaritan or Christian. Nevertheless, there were certain things characteristic of many forms of paganism (worship and sacrifice at temples, visiting sacred shrines, belief in the power of images of gods, and so on) and it is possible to determine pagan notions and practices distinct from those of Judaism, Samaritanism and Christianity.

CHAPTER ONE

1. M. Simon, Verus Israel, 2nd ed., Paris, 1964, pp.279-80. Some of the various aspects of the broad definition of Jewish-Christianity were explored by Simon in "Problèmes du Judéo-Christianisme", in Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme: Colloque de Strasbourg, 23-25 avril, 1964, Paris, 1965, pp.1-17. See also, idem, "Reflexions sur de Judéo-Christianisme", in J. Neusner (ed.), Christianity, Judaism and Other Graeco-Roman Cults, Vol. 2, Leiden, 1975, pp.53-76.
2. For a survey of what has been written about Jewish-Christianity up to 1972, see: B. Malina, "Jewish Christianity: A Select Bibliography", AJBA 1, 1973, pp.60-65; and see also: idem, "Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward a Hypothetical Definition", JSJ 7, 1976, pp.46-57; S. K. Riegel, "Jewish Christianity: Definition and Terminology", NTS 24, 1977-78, pp.410-415; R. Murray, "Defining Judaeo-Christianity", Heythrop Journal 15, 1974, pp.303-310; "Jews, Hebrews and Christians: Some Neglected Distinctions", NT 24, 1982, pp.194-208; G. Quispel, "The Discussion of Judaic Christianity", VC 22, 1968, pp.81-93; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times", NTS 6, 1959-60, pp.103-116; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Study of Jewish Christianity", NTS 20, 1973-4, pp.419-431; R. A. Kraft, "In Search of 'Jewish Christianity' and its 'Theology', Problems of Definition and Methodology," RSR 60, 1972, pp.81-96; and his review in JBL 79, 1960, pp.91-94; J. G. Gager, "Some Attempts to Label the Oracular Sibyllina", HTR 65, 1972, pp.91-97.
3. J. Daniélou, Théologie du Judéo-Christianisme (Hist. de doctrines chrétiennes avant Nicée 1), Tournai, 1958; Eng. transl. by J. A. Baker, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, London, 1964.
4. R. Longenecker (The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, London, 1970, pp.1-4), on the other hand, mainly used the New Testament to argue for a type of distinctive Jewish-Christian Christology in the early Church. However, Longenecker tends to refer to anything that was not Pauline or intended for a Gentile audience

as Jewish-Christian. He defines Jewish-Christians as those early Christians whose "conceptual frame of reference and whose expressions were rooted in semitic thought in general and Judaism in particular" (p.3), a category that easily includes Paul. He believes that Jewish-Christianity distinguished itself by looking to the Jerusalem community as the Mother Church and by seeking to continue its ministry (p.3-4), which is almost impossible to determine in the New Testament material and, again, Paul may be included in the category.

5. Daniélou, Eng. transl., p.11.

6. J. Daniélou, "Le traité de centesima, sexagesima, tricesima et le judéo-christianisme latin avant Tertullian", VC 25, 1971, pp.171-181.

7. R. A. Kraft, p.86.

8. F. C. Baur, "Die Christuspartei in der korinthischen Gemeinde, der Gegensatz des petrinischen und paulinischen Christentums in der ältesten Kirche, der Apostel Paulus in Rom", Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theologie 5:4, 1831, pp.61-206. Baur's understanding of the dichotomy is reflected by many modern writers. J. B. Tyson, for example, distinguishes between Jewish-Christians, who believed Jesus became Messiah only at the time of his resurrection, and Gentile Christians, who understood him to be the Son of God who descended to earth and was at his resurrection restored to divine status (A Study in Early Christianity, New York, 1973, pp.312-316). Such simplifications owe much to Baur.

9. A. Hilgenfeld, Judentum und Judenchristentum, Leipzig, 1886.

10. R. E. Brown, "Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity", CEQ 45, 1983, pp.74-79; R. E. Brown and E. Meier, Antioch and Rome, London, 1983, pp.1-9.

11. It is easily replaced by the simple term "Christian", since the adjective "Jewish" serves no useful purpose, see Klijn, p.426. For one interpretation of the term Χριστιανός see E. Bickerman, "The Name of Christians", in Studies in Jewish and Christian History, III, Leiden, 1986, pp.139-151.

12. M. Goodman, "Religion and Identity in the Early Roman Empire: Nerva and the Fiscus Judaicus", unpublished paper delivered on 20 October, 1988 in the London Ancient History Seminar, Institute of Classical Studies, 31-34 Gordon Square, London. I am grateful to Dr. Goodman for allowing me to read his manuscript.

13. M. Simon, "La migration à Pella: légende ou réalité?", RSR 60, 1972, pp.37-54; B. E. Gray, "The Movements of the Jerusalem Church during the First Jewish War", JEH 24, 1973, pp.1-7; R. Pritz, "On Brandon's Rejection of the Pella Tradition", Immanuel 13, 1981, pp.39-43 and the bibliography and discussion in R. Pritz, Nazarene Jewish Christianity, Jerusalem/Leiden, 1988, pp.122-127; C. Koester, "The Origin and Significance of the Flight to Pella Tradition", CBQ 51, 1989, pp.90-106.

14. G. Strecker, Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen (TU 70, Berlin, 1958, p.229ff; S. G. F. Brandon, The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church, London, 1957, p.168ff; idem, Jesus and the Zealots, Manchester, 1967, p.208ff.

15. G. Lüdemann, "The Successors of Pre-70 Jerusalem Christianity: A Critical Evaluation of the Pella Tradition," in E. Sanders (ed.), Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Vol. 1, Philadelphia, 1980, pp.161-173.

16. See H. H. Schaeder, "Ναζαρενός/Ναζοραῖος" in G. Kittel (ed.), Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. 4, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1942, pp.874-889, at 874-879, for the cognate examples. The waw in the Hebrew term נֹצְרִי, may have arisen from a plene spelling. The נֹצְרִי of Jer. 4:16; 31:6(5) was pronounced נֹצְרִי (see W. Weinberg, "The History of Hebrew Plene Spelling: from Antiquity to Haskalah", HUCA 46, 1975, pp.457-87, esp.473, n.49). For rabbinic examples see: (sing.) b.Sanh. 43a; b.AZ 6a, 16-17a; (plur.); b.Taan. 27b; b.Ber. 17b; b.Sota 47a; b.Sanh. 103a, 107a. In the Middle Ages, references to Nos^arim were frequently obscured by pseudonymous expressions such as "Amalekites" or "Egyptians".

17. The story of the Ethiopian "eunuch" probably arose as an explanation for the existence of a church. Luke would have sought foundation histories in the course of gathering information to write Acts (see: L. R. Donelson, "Cult Histories and the Sources of Acts", Biblica 68/1, 1987, pp.1-21). The question of whether he was a proselyte or just a godfearer cannot be answered on the evidence of the story alone. However, if he was a Gentile, it is very strange that Luke does not mention the fact. It seems more likely that Luke abbreviated a longer story for inclusion in his history, and deleted the early conversion history of the Ethiopian.

18. J. M. Ross ("Judaean in Acts 2:9", ET 96/7, 1985, p.217) suggestion that Ioudaean should read Iberian (modern Georgia), is as speculative as M. Dibelius' (Studies in the Acts of the Apostles, London, 1956, p.9) suggestion of Galatia. There is no reason to replace Judaean. Luke was not trying to indicate only the

astrological compass of the world, even if he did use the Twelve Kingdoms, with its obsolete Medes. See also: H. Conzelmann, Acts of the Apostles (Eng. transl. of Die Apostelgeschichte, Tübingen, 1963), ed. by E. J. Epp with C. Matthews, Philadelphia, 1987, p.14-15.

19. See above, n.4.

19a. See R. A. Kraft, "The Multifform Jewish Heritage of Early Christianity", in Neusner (ed.), Christianity, Judaism, Part 3, pp. 175-199.

20. A. A. T. Ehrhardt, "Judaean-Christians in Egypt, the Epistula Apostolorum and the Gospel to the Hebrews", Studia Evangelica 3 (TU 88), 1964, pp.360-382; A. F. J. Klijn, "Jewish Christianity in Egypt" in The Roots of Egyptian Christianity, ed. B. A. Pearson and J. E. Goehring, Philadelphia, 1986, pp.161-175. C. H. Roberts, "The Christian Book and the Greek Papyri", JTS 50, 1949, pp.155-168, idem, Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt, London, 1979, p.49; M. Hornschuh, Die Anfänge des Christentums in Ägypten, Inaug. diss. Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn, 1959.

21. G. Quispel, "African Christianity before Minucius Felix and Tertullian", Actus: Studies in Honour of H. L. W. Nelson, ed. J. den Boeft and A. H. M. Kessels, Utrecht, 1982, pp.257-335.

22. R. M. Grant, "Jewish Christianity at Antioch in the Second Century", RSR 60, 1972, pp.97-108; R. Murray, "The Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church", NTS 21, 1974-5, pp.59-80; D. E. Aune, "The Odes of Solomon and Early Christian Prophecy", NTS, 28, 1982, pp.435-460. The Didascalia Apostolorum (third century), for example, preserves a remnant of the notion that the Holy Spirit was feminine in the analogies given between the Christian ministry and the heavenly realm: the deaconesses are compared with the Holy Spirit (see: R. H. Connolly, Didascalia Apostolorum, Oxford, 1969, p.xlii, 88). The Gospel according to the Hebrews provides strong evidence that this was the original gender of the Holy Spirit, see E. Hennecke, New Testament Apocrypha, ed. by W. Schneemelcher, Eng. transl. ed. by R. McL. Wilson, Vol. 1, London, 1963 (henceforth NTA), pp.163-64. The feminine gender is also found in Aphrahat (Dem. iv, 292:24-293:5) and Ephrem (H. Epiph. viii.16), the Syrian Gospel of Philip (lv.23-26; lix.34-60.1, 6-9; lxix.4-8), the Odes of Solomon (xix.1-5; xxxv.1-5, cf. Ephrem, H. Epiph. i.5; xxxvi.1-5, cf. Moses bar Kepha, Exp. Bapt. Section 2). H. J. W. Drijvers ("Edessa und das jüdische christentum", VC 24, 1970, pp.4-33; "Jews and Christians at Edessa", JJS 36/1, 1985, pp.88-102), however, has argued that Edessene Christianity was pagan in origin until the end of the

third century, and consisted of Semignostic, Gnostic and Encratite groups with no interest in Jewish religion. During the fourth century, association with and influence by the Jewish population increased.

23. See above, n.12.

24. P. Donahue has argued strongly against Lightfoot's identification of these Judaisers with the Docetists, in "Jewish-Christianity in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch", VC 32, 1978, pp.81-93. Donahue's point that "we know of no such mélange as Jewish-Christian Gnosticism; a Gnosticism of a much later period influenced by Jewish literature, but not Jewish in any other sense, does not provide such a model" (p.87) is one that should be taken. However, the seeds of Docetism may yet be found in the ambience of non-rabbinic Judaism. The Letter to the Hebrews, clearly addressed to a Jewish church, appears to be discouraging a belief that Christ was an angel who did not partake fully in the world as a human being (Heb. 1:1-2:18).

25. William Horbury suggested that those of mixed descent formed an appreciable group within Hellenistic society, suspected by both Jews and Gentiles alike (in "Judaisers of Mixed Descent", an unpublished paper delivered at a colloquium at Kings College, London, entitled "Jews and Christians in Asia Minor", Oct. 21, 1987).

26. N. R. M. de Lange, Origen and the Jews, Cambridge, 1976, pp.69, 86-7.

27. Hymn xix of Hymns on the Unleavened Bread (ed. E. Beck, CSCO, Vol. 248). See also: A. P. Hayman, "The Image of the Jew in the Syriac Anti-Jewish Polemical Literature" in J. Neusner and E. S. Frerichs (eds), To See Ourselves as Others See Us, Chico. Ca., 1985, pp.431-2.

28. PG 48, cols. 844-942. Translation by P. W. Harkins, The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 68, Washington, 1979.

29. See R. Wilken, John Chrysostom and the Jews, Los Angeles, 1983, pp.66-79.

30. A. P. Hayman, The Disputation of Sergius the Stylite Against a Jew (CSCO 338-9), Louvain, 1973, pp.434-440.

31. *Ibid.*, p.440.

32. Cf. Basil of Caesarea, Ep. cclxv; Gregory of Nyssa, Ep. iii:24; Gregory Nazianzus, Or. cii.

33. Basil of Caesarea, Or. colxiii.

34. That he was not, as some have supposed, an Ebionite has been conclusively demonstrated by G. A. Koch, "A Critical Investigation of Epiphanius' Knowledge of the Ebionites: A Translation and Critical Discussion of Panarion 30", Ph. D. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1976; Ann Arbor, Univ. Microfilms, pp.374-383. Koch argues that Joseph's second marriage was due to expediency, to escape Arian ordination, and was not "an enunciation of principle" viz. indicative that he subscribed to the apparent "Ebionite" marriage code as Epiphanius defines it (cf. Pan xxx.5.8). The books which were in the archives of Tiberias were in Hebrew for the benefit of rabbis, not because they were Ebionite. They included the canonical Gospel of John and the Acts of the Apostles, as well as the Hebrew version of the Gospel of Matthew. One must also note that if Epiphanius, whose task in Panarion was to refute all heresy, saw Joseph as orthodox and not Ebionite, there is hardly any reason for us to suspect him of heterodox beliefs. He was ostracised in Scythopolis not because of any heresy as such, but because the Christians there were Arian, under the leadership of the Arian confidant of Constantius, Patrophilus.

35. The fig tree story by Aphrahat and Cyril is a striking example of a probable tradition from the early Jewish foundation of the Church which made its way through to the fourth century in two very different churches. See: Robert Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, London, 1975, p.256, n.2.

36. See n.2 above.

37. A. Harnack, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Tübingen, 1909, pp.310-334.

38. R. Seeberg, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Leipzig, 1922, repr. Darnstadt, 1965, pp.249-267.

39. H. -J. Schoeps, Das Judenthum. Untersuchungen über Gruppenbildung und I-artelkämpfe in der frühen Christenheit, Bern, 1964, Eng. transl. by D. Hare, Jewish Christianity, Philadelphia, 1969, p.18. See also: idem, Theologie und Geschichte des Judenthums, Tübingen, 1949; cf. idem, Urgemeinde Judenthums; Gnosis, Tübingen, 1956.

40. A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects, Leiden, 1973, pp.19-43, 68-71.

41. Koch, pp.359-368.

42. Epiphanius, Pan. xxx.26.1-2, 33.4,7; Origen, in

Matt. comm. ser. lxxix (imitatores Christi).

43. "Judaistic Christianity" was Hort's term to define Christian groups which preserved and valued the Jewish law, see: F. J. A. Hort, Judaistic Christianity, Cambridge/London, 1894; W. P. Slater, "Hort's Lectures on 'Judaistic Christianity'", Expositor 1895-8, pp.128-140.

44. For the question of whether the Qumran community used the term **עֲבֹנִיִּים**, see L. E. Keck, "The Poor among the Saints in Jewish Christianity and Qumran", ZNTW 57, 1966, pp.54-78.

45. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. iii.11.7; Tertullian, de Praescr. xxx.3-5, 11; Origen, in Ep. ad Rom. iii.11; Methodius, Symp. viii.10; Ambrose, De Fide, v.8.105; Jerome, in Gal. 1:1; in Tit. iii.10-11; Pacianus, Ep. 1.1; Rufinus, Expos. symb. xxxvii; Cassian, De Incarn. dom. c. Nest. iii.5; Ps-Augustine, Serm. clxix.5; Alexander Minorita, Expos. in Apoc. ii.2.2.

46. G. Strecker considers that it was originally applied to a specific Jewish-Christian group who tried to uphold the Jewish ideal of poverty and that the title was later transformed by the heresiologists into a general designation for sectarian Jewish-Christianity (G. Strecker, "On the Problem of Jewish Christianity", Appendix 1 in W. Bauer, Othodoxy and Heresy in Earlist Christianity, Eng. transl. of Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum (Tübingen, 1964), London, 1971, pp.241-285, at p.273, and see his discussion on Ebionites in general, p.272ff, which traces how the Church Fathers subsumed diverse groups into the "Ebionite heresy").

47. GCS Origenes Werke, IX, p.319.

48. See R. L. Wilken, "The Restoration of Israel in Biblical Prophecy" in Neusner and Frerichs (eds), To See Ourselves as Others See Us, p.450.

49. GCS XIX, p.260.

50. So Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.39.16; iv.22.8; Jerome, Ep. xx.5; cxx.8; De Vir. Ill. iii. Epiphanius dubs it "according to the Hebrews" (Pan. xxx.3.7 cf. xxx.13.1-8, Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.27.4). Jerome apparently found such a gospel with "Ebionites" in Aleppo (Contra Ruf. vii.77 cf. in Matt. vi.11; xii.13) and translated it into Greek and Latin. See: Pritz, Nazarene Jewish-Christianity, pp.83-94; W. Schneemelcher in NTA I, p.117-165.

51. For a discussion of the history of Pseudo-Clementine scholarship, see F. Stanley Jones, "The Pseudo-

Clementines: A History of Research", The Second Century 2, pp.1-34 (Part 1), pp.63-96 (Part 2). Much of Pseudo-Clementine research has concentrated on distinguishing the Kerygmata Petrou (KP). H. Waitz' view that the KP was derived from a cultic group of Gnostic Palestinian-Syrian Jewish-Christians with an anti-Elchasaite tendency, subsequently redacted by an anti-Marcionite Syrian Jewish-Christian (Die Pseudo-Clementinen: Homilien und Rekognitionem. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung, Leipzig, 1904, pp.162-3, 366-7) shows how convoluted some critical studies in this area can become. Furthermore, Schoeps, who once championed the KP as the main source for understanding the Ebionites, later rejected any attempt, including his own, at reconstruction of this source: "Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklemintinen" in Studien zur unbekannten Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft für Geistesgeschichte, Vol. 3, Göttingen, 1963, pp.91-97. For a more optimistic approach, see: Strecker, "Problems", pp.257-271, but Strecker notes that baptism has replaced circumcision in the community responsible for the KP (p.266-7) and that the Christianity of the KP was not a sectarian conventicle.

52. J. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites and their Literature", in Essays in the Semitic Background of the New Testament, London, 1971, pp.435-480.

53. Klijn and Reinink, p.78-9 (Appendix II) have an interesting comparative table showing the relationship between Epiphanius' description of the Ebionites, and the description of the Elchasaïtes provided by Epiphanius, Hippolytus and Eusebius, along with a corresponding list indicating whether these features occur in the Pseudo-Clementine literature. It is enough to show that there was a strong relationship between the group which had these characteristics and the Pseudo-Clementines. Whether this group was Ebionite, and not Elchasaite, is uncertain.

54. Strecker, "Problems", pp.241-285. Strecker notes that W. C. van Unnik ("De beteekenis van de mozaïsche vet voor de kerk van Christus volgens de syrische Didascalie," Nederlandsch Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenes 31, 1939, pp.65-100) argues that the heretics are Judaizing Christians who adopted only some Jewish praxis, but Strecker rightly suggests that the term "heretics" would then be too harsh for the group. Certainly, Christians who adopted a few Jewish customs and participated in festivals were considered to be in error, but not exactly heretics. Strecker's view that in this part of Syria the Jewish-Christians occupied the "orthodox" position superior to "catholicism" (p.257) does, however, push the evidence somewhat. The reference to "believing Hebrews" (Didasc. xxi), with whom the

catholic church is in communion, surely does not refer to the Jewish-Christian "heretics" but to Jews who had converted to the "catholic" type of Christianity.

55. F. Williams, The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Leiden, 1987, p.xviii.

56. Klijn and Reinink, pp.3-19.

57. Ibid, pp.52-54, 68. According to Eusebius (Hist. Eccles. vi.17, Dem. Evang. vii.1, cf. Jerome, de Vir. Ill. lvi, in Hab. iii.11f, cf. Praef. in Esdr. PL 28, 1404) Symmachus was an Ebionite. Epiphanius, however, considers him a Samaritan convert to Judaism (de Mens. et Pond. xvi). However, Alison Salvesen, in her recent thesis "The Translation of Symmachus in the Pentateuch and its place in Exegetical Tradition" (D.Phil., Oxford, 1988) argues that Symmachus is a rabbinic Jew of the late second century).

58. Ibid, p.72.

59. G. P. Luttikhuisen, The Revelation of Elchasai, Tübingen, 1985. Fundamentally the same conclusions about the Elchasaites were reached by Klijn and Reinink, p.66-7) who describe them as "an apocalyptic syncretistic missionary movement which originated during the Roman invasion of Parthia within a Jewish community which tried to show its allegiance with the Parthians". The relationship between the Kerygmata Petrou and the Elchasaites has not been satisfactorily established, but see Schneemelcher in NTA II, pp.103-111 and Klijn and Reinink, p.78-79 - Appendix II.

60. The Elchasaites are described by Hippolytus, Ref. omn. haer. Prol. ix.4, 13-17; x.29.1-3; Origen, in Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. vi.38, and by Epiphanius Pan. xix.53. For studies of the movement prior to Luttikhuisen, see: W. Brandt, Elchasai, ein Religionstifter und sein Werk, Leipzig, 1912; H. Waitz, "Das Buch des Elchasai, das heilige Buch der judenchristlichen Sekte der Sobiai, in Harnack-Ehrung, Leipzig, 1921, pp.87-104; A. Harnack, History of Dogma, I, New York, 1961 (Eng. transl. of Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte), pp.304-308; J. Irmscher in NTA II, pp.745-750.

61. A. Hilgenfeld believed that the Nazoraeans were descended from non-Pharisaic Jewish-Christians within the early Church, since they were not Judaisers (a characteristic he thought typical of Pharisees), but were influenced by Elchasai. Against the Tübingen School, A. Harnack argued that the Jerusalem church was generally in sympathy with Paul, and that the Nazoraeans (along with the Ebionites) were the obscure descendents of this

church. Pritz, Nazarene Jewish Christianity, p.108, concludes that the Nazoraeans were descendants of the first Jewish followers of Jesus, who fled from Jerusalem and had roots in Galilee. He does not credit the early Jewish church as having founded communities outside Eretz Israel and sees them as sectarian from the very beginning, without ever explaining how he arrived at such important presuppositions.

62. See Chapter 12 for a discussion of the location of various towns named Kochaba in the late Roman and Byzantine period.

63. A. F. J. Klijn, "Jerome's Quotations from a Nazarene Interpretation of Esaiiah", RSR 60, 1972, pp.241-255; Klijn and Reinink, pp.49-50.

CHAPTER TWO

1. F. Manns, Bibliographie du Judéo-Christianisme, Jerusalem, 1979.

2. Ibid., pp.5-7.

3. R. A. S. Macalister, A Century of Excavation in Palestine, 2nd ed., London, 1930, p.29.

4. A discussion on the history of Biblical archaeology can be found in The New International Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology, ed. by E. M. Blaiklock and R. K. Harrison, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1983, pp.47-60. See also: W. F. Albright, the Archaeology of Palestine, Harmondsworth, 1949, pp.219-249.

5. Bullarium Franciscanum, Rome, 1902.

6. See P. Testini, Archeologia cristiana, Rome, 1958, p.66; J. Stevenson, The Catacombs: Rediscovered Monuments of Early Christianity, London, 1978, pp.50-52.

7. G. Marchi, Monumenti delle arti cristianae primitive nella metropoli del cristianismo, Rome, 1844; G. B. de Rossi, Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae, Rome, Vol. 1, 1857-1861; Vol. 2, 1888 (et al); idem, Roma sotteranea cristiana, Vols. 1-3, Rome, 1864-1867.

8. For a history of the Roman school and an argument against its methodology, see G. F. Snyder, Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine, Macon, Georgia, 1985, pp.3-11, particularly, as regards an outline of the school's methodology, p.6. Snyder himself argues for a contextual methodology.

9. Texts which the Bagatti-Testa school identifies as Jewish-Christian and texts which show evidence of Jewish-Christianity have been collected and translated into Italian by Bagatti and Testa in Corpus Scriptorum de Ecclesia Matre, Vol IV: Gerusalemme. La redenzione secondo la tradizione biblica dei SS. Padri, Jerusalem, 1982. Volumes 1 to 3 are still in preparation.
10. Snyder, p.6.
11. R. de Vaux, "On Right and Wrong Uses of Archaeology," in J. Sanders (ed.), Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century, New York, 1970, pp.64-80.
12. Snyder, p.5.
13. C. Clermont-Ganneau, Archaeological Researches 1873-1874, Vol. 1, London, 1899; idem, "Epigraphes hébraïques et grecques sur des ossuaires juifs inédits", RA (3d) 1, 1883, pp.257-268.
14. See C. M. Kaufmann, Handbuch der Christlichen Archaeologie, 3d, Paderborn, 1922, p.143.
15. E. L. Sukenik, "The Earliest Records of Christianity", AJA 51, 1947, pp.351-365.
16. Ibid., p.363.
17. Ibid., p.364.
18. See M. Maiuri, "La croce di Ercolano", in Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archaeologia 15, 1939, pp.193-218.
19. C. H. Kraeling, "Christian Burial Urns", BA 9, 1946, pp.16-20 at p.19.
20. Ibid., p.18.
21. Clermont-Ganneau, Archaeological Researches, p.381.
22. B. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani in Palestina anteriori a Costantino", RAC 26, 1950, pp.117-131, at pp.118-120.
23. For an examination of both these inscriptions, see J. P. Kane, "By No Means, 'The Earliest Records of Christianity' - with an Emended Reading of the Talpioth Inscription IHΘΥΣ ΙΟΥ", PEQ, 1971, pp.103-108.
24. R. H. Smith, "The Cross Marks on Jewish Ossuaries", PEQ, 1974, pp.53-66.
25. P. Figueras, "Jewish Ossuaries and Secondary Burial:

Their Significance for Early Christianity", Immanuel 19, 1984-5, pp.41-57. For further clarifications about these ossuaries and ossuaries in general see: P. Figueras, Jewish and Christian Beliefs on Life after Death in the Light of Ossuary Decoration, Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Hebrew University, March 1974; J. P. Kane, "The Ossuary Inscriptions of Jerusalem", JSS 23, 1978, pp.268-282; D. Fishwick, "The Talpiot Ossuaries Again", NTS 10, 1963-4, pp.49-61.

26. B. Bagatti, "Il cristianesimo a Kerak in Transgiordania", TS 20, 1940, pp.1-4; idem, "Il cristianesimo nella capitale della Transgiordania (Amman)", TS 23, 1948, pp.35-39.

27. B. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani" (see above, note 22); idem, Gli antichi edifici sacri di Betlemme in seguito agli scavi e restauri praticati dalla Custodia di Terra Santa (1948-1951), Jerusalem, 1952.

28. B. Bagatti, "Scoperta di un cimitero giudeo-cristiano al 'Dominus Flevit' (Monte Oliveto - Gerusalemme)", LA 3, 1953, pp.149-184; B. Bagatti and J. T. Milik, Gli scavi del 'Dominus Flevit', Part 1, Jerusalem 1958, pp.166-182.

29. Bagatti and Milik, p.177.

30. Ibid., pp.166-169.

31. A. Ferrua's review of Bagatti and Milik, in RAC 30, 1954, p.268.

32. Review of Bagatti and Milik, in IEJ 11, 1961, pp.91-94.

33. Ibid., pp.93-94.

34. Ibid., p.94.

35. Bagatti and Milik, pp.64-65, Photo 75, Fig. 17.

36. Ibid., pp.178-179.

37. Figueras, "Jewish Ossuaries", p.49. See also: P. Colella, "Les abbréviations et XP", RB 80, 1973, pp.547-558; M. Avi-Yonah, Abbreviations in Greek Inscriptions: The Near East, 200 B.C. - A.D. 1100 (QDAP Suppl. to Vol. 9), Jerusalem, 1940, pp.111-112.

38. Pace E. M. Meyers, "Early Judaism and Christianity in the Light of Archaeology", BA 51, 1988, pp.69-79 at p.71.

39. B. Bagatti, "Origine e sviluppo dell'iconografia

cristiana in Palestina", LA 4, 1954, pp.277-309.

40. See Manns, pp.195-207.

41. J. Daniélou, "Symbolik des Taufritus", Liturgie und Monchtum 3, 1949, pp.45-68; idem, "Le symbolism du Jour de Pâque", Dieu Vivant 18, 1951, pp.45-56; idem, "Le symbole des quarante jours", La Maison-Dieu 31, 1952, pp.19-33; idem, "La charrue symbole de la croix", RSR 42, 1954, pp.193-203.

42. J. Daniélou, Les symboles chrétiens primitifs, Paris, 1961, p.8. This book collects together a further nine articles written about early Christian symbols.

43. Daniélou reported on the theories of Bagatti and Testa in RSR 51, 1963, pp.117-122, RSR 55, 1967, pp.92-96; RSR 56, 1968, pp.119-120 and RSR 58, 1970, pp.143-145.

44. I. Mancini, Le scoperte archeologiche sui Giudeo-Cristiani - Note storiche (Collectio Assisiensis 6), Assis, 1968, Eng. transl. by G. Bushell, Archaeological Discoveries Relative to the Judaeo-Christians, Jerusalem, 1970, updated and reprinted 1984; French transl. by A. Storme, L'Archéologie judéo-chrétienne, Jerusalem, 1977.

45. Pers. comm.: letter to J. E. Taylor dated Jan. 18, 1988.

46. I understand that these remain out of respect for Father Bagatti.

47. B. Bagatti, "Al centro degli Arcontici, Kh. Kilkish presso Hebron", TS 40, 1964, pp.264-269.

48. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.38.

49. H. C. Puech, "Archontiker", in Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum, Stuttgart, 1950-, Vol. 1, pp.634-643.

50. A. F. J. Klijn, Seth in Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Literature, Leiden, 1977, p.119.

51. This is a matter discussed amongst archaeologists in Jerusalem but, in the sensitive climate there, no one has published a work designed to prove the steles are frauds. Certainly, it has been felt that only a Franciscan could do this without causing bitter animosity between the different archaeological communities, none of which wishes to publicly embarrass another. Since the steles have now been put away out of view, it would seem that it is hoped that everyone will quietly forget about them. It may also be mentioned sotto voce in this note

that in regard to another fraud Testa has fared badly. In 1973 Testa published a bought stone inscription which he thought came from Samaritan Christians and indicated a Samaritan Christian regeneration myth (see: E. Testa, "La mitica rigenerazione della vita in un amuleto samaritano-cristiano del IV secolo", LA 23, 1973, pp.286-317). R. Pummer ("New Evidence for Samaritan Christianity?", CBQ 41, 1979, pp.107-112) thought the identification of the letters as being Samaritan very questionable (p.109). Then, J. Naveh showed that the letters derived from the coins of the Bar Kochba revolt ("An Ancient Amulet or a Modern Forgery?", CBQ 44, 1982, pp.282-284; cf. H. Shanks, "Clumsy Forger fools the Scholars - But Only for a Time", BAR 10, 1984, pp.71-72) and that the stone "amulet" was a forgery.

52. B. Bagatti, "Ritrovamenti nella Nazaret evangelica", LA 5, 1955, pp.5-44; Gli Scavi de Nazaret, Vol. 1, Jerusalem, 1967; Eng. transl. by E. Hoade, Excavations in Nazareth, Jerusalem, 1969.

53. Testa, "Le grotte mistiche dei Nazareni"; cf. B. Bagatti, "I battisteri della Palestina", in Actes du Ve Congrès International d'Archeologie Chrétienne, Vatican/Paris, 1957, pp.213-227; idem, "Gli altari paleo-cristiani della Palestina", LA 7, 1957, pp.64-94.

54. V. C. Corbo, Cafarnao I: Gli edifici della Città, Jerusalem, 1975; S. Loffreda, Cafarnao II: La Ceramica, Jerusalem, 1974; A. Spijkerman, ^{Cafarnao III} Catalogo della Monete della Città, Jerusalem, 1975; E. Testa, Cafarnao IV: I graffiti della Casa di S. Pietro, Jerusalem, 1972.

55. The output of the Bagatti-Testa school may be seen in the list supplied in Manns, pp.190-195. This list also includes authors who are sympathetic with the Bagatti-Testa position.

56. I. Grego, I Giudeo-Cristiani nel IV Secolo: Reazioni - Influssi, Jerusalem, 1982.

57. B. Bagatti, "Ricerche sull'iconografia della Koimesis o Dormitio Mariae", LA 25, 1975, pp.225-253; idem, "Note sull'iconografia di Adamo sotto il Calvario", LA 27, 1977, pp.5-32; idem, "L'iconografia di Maria in croce", LA 28, 1978, pp.203-216; idem, "L'iconografia del Verbo-Cristo", LA 29, 1979, pp.175-206; idem, "La luce nell'iconografia della Natività di Gesu", LA 30, 1980, pp.233-250; idem, "L'iconografia della tentazione di Adamo ed Eva", LA 31, 1981, pp. 217-230; idem, "L'iconografia dell'Anastasis o Discesa agli Inferi", LA 32, 1982, pp.239-272; idem, "L'iconografia della cena del Signore col pesce", LA 33, 1983, pp.303-318; idem, "La posizione dell'ariete nell'iconografia del sacrificio di Abramo", LA 34, 1984, pp.283-306. On

account of age and ill health, Father Bagatti is no longer producing articles.

58. E. Testa, "L'Angelologia dei giudeo-cristiani", LA 33, 1983, pp.273-302; idem, "La settimana santa dei giudeo-cristiani e suoi influssi nella Pasqua della grande Chiesa", LA 35, 1985, pp.163-202.

59. Briand's guidebook to Nazareth is a characteristic example.

60. G. Cornfeld, Archaeology of the Bible: Book by Book, London, 1976.

61. Ibid., p.269.

62. Ibid., p.284.

63. Ibid., pp.284-285.

64. Ibid., pp.291-292.

65. Ibid., p.294.

66. Ibid., pp.283-284.

67. Ibid., p.308.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., pp.308-309.

70. E. M. Meyers and J. F. Strange, Archaeology, the Rabbis and Early Christianity, London, 1981, p. 107, cf. pp.110-115, 139.

71. Ibid., pp.130-137.

72. Ibid., p.137.

73. Ibid., pp.138-139.

74. Ibid., p.138.

75. See above, n.38. Meyers' definition of Jewish-Christianity is somewhat wide-sweeping. He writes, "The term Jewish-Christianity first referred to believers in the messiahship of Jesus from among the native Palestinian Jewish population early in the common era. It has come to apply to all those of Jewish birth who adopted the new faith", p.79. In a companion article, Dennis E. Groh expresses much admiration for "the brilliant Franciscan excavators" who have discovered evidence of Jewish-Christians in Galilee: "Jews and Christians in Late Roman Palestine: Towards a New

Chronology", BA 51, 1988, pp.80-96.

76. Meyers, "Early Judaism and Christianity", p.71.

77. J. F. Strange, "Diversity in Early Palestinian Christianity", ATR 65, 1983, pp.14-24.

78. Ibid., p.22.

79. Cf. E. Testa, "La piscina probatica, monumento pagano o giudaico?", TS 40, pp.311-316.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Klijn and Reinink, p.71.

2. S. Loffreda, Recovering Capernaum, Jerusalem, 1985, pp.29-30; cf. idem, A Visit to Capernaum, Jerusalem, 1972, pp.41-43; Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.21-22.

3. Pace S. T. Lachs ("Rabbi Abahu and the Minim," JQR 15, 1969-70, pp.197-212) who says that in the Talmud Balaam is a kind of Jesus figure if not Jesus himself (cf. b.Sanh. 106b; b.Git. 57a).

4. For the old view that minim frequently referred to Jewish-Christians, see: R. T. Herford, Christianity in Talmud and Midrash, London, 1903, p.255f. For a modern speculative discussion, see: S. Freyne, Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian, 323BCE to 135CE, Notre Dame, 1980, pp.344-91.

5. M. Jastrow, A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature, New York, 1950, p.775.

6. W. Horbury, "The Benediction of the Minim and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy", JTS 33, 1982, pp.19-61.

7. H. L. Strack, Jesus, die Häretiker und Christen, nach den ältesten jüdischen Angaben, Leipzig, 1910, p.31.

8. R. Kimelman, "Birkat ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Prayer in Late Antiquity", in E. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten and A. Mendelson (eds), Studies in Jewish and Christian Self-Definition, Vol. 2, London, 1981, pp.226-244. See also, D. Flusser, "The Jewish-Christian Schism (Part II)", Immanuel 17, 1983-4, pp.30-39 at pp.32-34.

9. De Lange, p.44.

10. M. Goodman, State and Society in Roman Galilee, A.D. 132-212, Totowa, N.J., 1983, p.105.

11. See Lachs (above, n.3) for a survey of these texts.
12. Cf. J. Neusner, Eleazar ben Hyrcanus: The Tradition and the Man, Leiden, 1973, I, pp.400-403; II, p.366f. It may be mentioned here that Bagatti has argued for the min Jacob to be considered a Christian in "Il 'min' Giacobbe in Kafar Soma delle fonti rabbiniche", TS 32, 1956, pp.170-171.
13. Kimelman, p.232.
14. F. C. R. Thee, Julius Africanus and the Early Christian View of Magic, Tübingen, 1984.
15. See M. Smith, Jesus the Magician, London, 1978.
16. Pritz, Nazarene Jewish Christianity, pp.96-97. As an aside, one may note that Bagatti believes he can distinguish the tomb of this min Jacob. He considers this to be identified with the mausoleum of a Saddiq Yacub in the village of Sakhnin, but this is more likely to be the alleged tomb of Rabbi Joshua (see: B. Bagatti, "All ricerca della tomba del Min Giacobbe", TS 43, 1967, pp.74-77; idem, "Ricerche su alcuni antichi siti giudeo-cristiani", LA 11, 1961, pp.288-314 at pp.302-304; idem, Antichi villaggi cristiani di Galilea, Jerusalem, 1971, pp.145-153, cf. pp.197-202; idem, Circumcision, pp.95-96.
17. Goodman, p.106. See also: A. F. Segal, Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism, Leiden, 1977, p.121; G. Vermes, Post-Biblical Jewish Studies, Leiden, 1975, p.169ff; A. Büchler, Studies in Jewish History, London, 1956, pp.243-274. Büchler believed that already in the second to third centuries in Galilee, the word min denoted non-Jewish sectarians.
18. Goodman, p.180.
19. Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.27.5; Epiphanius, Pan. xix.5.1; xxix.7.5; xxx.2.2, 17.5; Jerome, Ep. cxii.2; Filaster, Div. Her. Lib. xxxvi; Pseudo-Hieronymus x; Augustine, Contra Faust. xix.4; Ep. xvi.16.1; Rufinus, Exp. Symb. xxxvii; Theodore of Cyr, Haer. Fab. ii.1; Nicephorus Callistus, Hist. Eccles. iii.13.
20. Goodman, p.51, 104, 107, 177, 181.
21. Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.21-22.
22. G. Schumacher, The Jaulan, London, 1888, p.183, Figs. 74-76 (on different slabs).
23. Ibid., p.116, Fig. 27.

24. W. F. Albright, "Bronze Age Mounds of Northern Palestine and the Hauran: the Spring Trip of the School in Jerusalem", BASOR 19, 1925, pp.5-19 at p.14.
25. C. Dauphin, "Farj en Gaulanitide: refuge judéo-chrétien?", Proche-Orient Chrétien 34, 1984, pp.233-245. See also: idem, "Jewish and Christian Communities: A Study of Evidence from Archaeological Surveys", PEQ, 1982, 129-142.
26. Dauphin, "Farj", pp.240-241.
27. Ibid., p.243, cf. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.23 cf. "Le antichità di Kh. Qana e di Kefr Kenna in Galilea", LA 15, 1965, pp.251-292, at p.292.
28. A. Negev, "The Chronology of the Seven-Branched Candelabrum", EI 8, 1963, pp.193-210 (Hebrew).
29. Schumacher, pp.114-115, Fig. 23 and see Z. U. Maoz, "Comments on Jewish and Christian Communities in Byzantine Palestine", PEQ, 1985, pp.59-68.
30. Two or three synagogues have been found in Sepphoris and two in Tiberias, although literary sources report that regions of Sepphoris and Tiberias had 18 and 13 respectively, see L. I. Levine, "Ancient Synagogues - A Historical Introduction", in idem (ed.), Ancient Synagogues Revealed, Jerusalem, 1981, pp.1-10.
31. M. Avi-Yonah, Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land (henceforth EAEHL), 4 vols, London, 1975-1978; II, p.353.
32. M. Avi-Yonah, The Jews of Palestine: A Political History from the Bar Kochba War to the Arab Conquest, Oxford, 1976, also published as The Jews under Roman and Byzantine Rule, Jerusalem, 1976, p.17.
33. Theodoret, Cur. Affect. xi.71; Jerome, Comm. in Soph. i.15-16; John Chrysostom, Hom. in Psalm. x.9.
34. See Z. U. Maoz, "The Art and Architecture of the Synagogues of the Golan", in Levine (ed.), Ancient Synagogues, pp.98-115; idem, "Ancient Synagogues of the Golan", BA 51, 1988, pp.116-128; C. M. Dauphin and J. J. Schonfield, "Settlements of the Roman and Byzantine Periods on the Golan Heights: Preliminary Report on Three Seasons of Survey (1979-1981)", IEJ 33, 1983, pp.189-206; Dauphin, "Jewish and Christian Communities" and Maoz, "Comments on Jewish and Christian Communities".
35. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.15-19.

36. Ibid, p.18.
37. Aristobulus I was the agent of this change, see: Emil Schürer, History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black, Vol. I, Edinburgh, 1973, pp.217-218.
38. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.80.
39. Gen. Rab. 32:19; 81:4.
40. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.80-81. See also: G. Alon, History of the Jews in Eretz-Israel in the Times of the Mishnah and the Talmud, II, Tel Aviv, 1973 (Hebrew), pp.55, 116-117 on the "holy community which is in Jerusalem" (b.Beizah 14b; 21a).
41. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.123-124.
42. Ibid., p.16.
43. Ibid., p.132.
44. Ibid.
45. In the Rehov synagogue mosaic inscription Eretz-Israel is defined in much the same way as in t.Shev. 4, Sifre Deut. 10 and j.Shev. 6:36c. The boundary ran from the Waters of Gaaton, nine kilometres north of Ptolemais, to the area of Paneas, and then went south-east to the borders of Bostra, south of Petra, and west to Ascalon. It thereby included the Golan, where there were a number of Jewish settlements, but excluded much of Palaestina Tertia, which was almost entirely populated by Gentiles. See J. Sussman, "The Inscription in the Synagogue at Rehob", in Levine (ed.), Ancient Synagogues, pp.146-153. It is probable that the Samaritans were included with the Jews in "Israel" in estimates of population proportions.
46. Answering a question on the meaning of the term terra repromissionis, Jerome says: "The Jews assert that it is this land (Palestine) that is the land of promise" (Ep. cxxix.3); see Wilken, "Restoration of Israel", p.446.
47. H. Chadwick, Origen: Contra Celsum, Cambridge, 1953, p.211.
48. Quoted from D. Rokeah, Jews, Pagans and Christians in Conflict, Jerusalem/Leiden, 1982, p. 80.
49. Goodman, p.53.
50. EAEHL IV, pp.1052-1054.

51. Eusebius, Mart. Pal. viii.1, see T. D. Barnes, Constantine and Eusebius, Cambridge, Mass., 1981, p.357, n.39.
52. E. M. Meyers, E. Netzer, C. L. Meyers, "Sepphoris, 'Ornament of All Galilee'", BA 49, 1986, pp.4-19, at p.13; idem, IEJ 35, 1985, p.296.
53. M. Avi-Yonah, A Gazetteer of Roman Palestine (henceforth GRP) Jerusalem, 1976, p.95.
54. E. M. Meyers, E. Netzer, C. L. Meyers, "Artistry in Stone: the Mosaics of Ancient Sepphoris", BA 50, 1987, pp.223-31.
55. Meyers et al, "Sepphoris", pp.4-5.
56. S. Appelbaum, Prolegomena to the Study of the Second Jewish Revolt (AD 132-135), Oxford, 1976, p.6; Goodman, p.46.
57. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.46.
58. Goodman, p.46.
59. J. Ferguson, The Religions of the Roman Empire, London, 1970, pp.40-41. Ferguson goes on to note (p.41) that when Hadrian was planning his world journey some time after 120 he issued a coin depicting Jupiter, as lord of the world, placing it under the emperor's care. At the end of Hadrian's life coins were issued honouring Jupiter under the titles of Victor, Protector and Guardian, while after his death a dedication to Jupiter Best and Greatest seems to honour Hadrian himself, identified with the god.
60. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.47.
61. M. Dothan, "The Synagogue at Hammath-Tiberias", in Levine (ed.), Ancient Synagogues, pp.63-69 at 64.
62. M. Simon, Verus Israel, p.49.
63. Meyers et al, "Sepphoris", p.7.
64. Ibid., pp.6-8.
65. Goodman, p.29.
66. Ibid., p.180.
67. E. E. Urbach, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry in the Second and Third Centuries in the Light of Archaeological and Historical Facts", IEJ 9, 1959, pp.149-165, 229-245. Rabban Gamaliel justified his visit

to the Baths of Aphrodite in Ptolemais by saying that the image of the goddess was there only for adornment: m.A.Z. 3:4.

68. R. Amiran, "A Fragment of an Ornamental Relief from Kfar Bar'am", IEJ 6, 1956, pp.239-245, p.244; G. Foerster, "Architectural Models of the Greco-Roman Period and the Origin of the 'Galilean' Synagogue", in Levine (ed.) Ancient Synagogues, pp.45-48. The temple of Baal-Shamin at Sia and the Nabataean temple at Sahur are clear parallels.

69. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.75. E. R. Goodenough was, of course, convinced of a pagan connection, see his monumental series of volumes: Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, 13 vols, New York, 1953f.

70. G. Foerster, "The Zodiac in Ancient Synagogues and its Place in Jewish Thought and Literature", EI 19, 1987, pp.225-234 (Hebrew).

71. A. Ovadiah, "The Synagogue at Gaza", in Levine (ed.), Ancient Synagogues, pp.129-132.

72. For Greek see: K. Holl (ed), GCS: Epiphanius I, Leipzig, 1915, p.347.

73. So Bagatti, Nazareth, pp.16-18; and see: F. Manns, "Un centre judéo-chrétien important: Sepphoris", in Essais sur le judéo-christianisme, edited by F. Manns, Jerusalem, 1977, pp.165-190.

74. Goodman, p.106.

75. See: H. Gelzer, H. Hilgenfeld and O. Cuntz (eds), Patrum Nicaenorum, Leipzig, 1898, and: F. Van der Meer and C. Mohrmann, Atlas of the Early Christian World, transl. and edited by M. F. Hedlund and H. H. Rowley, Amsterdam, 1958, Map 4.

76. For the Greek version see: GCS 11, ed. E. Schwartz, 1908. The complete long version survives only in a Syriac manuscript from A.D.411 (BM MS no. 12,150) translated by W. Cureton, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea: History of the Martyrs in Palestine, London/Edinburgh, 1861. The short version is frequently found included in translations of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, e.g. in A. C. McGiffert, The Church History of Eusebius (A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 2nd Series, Vol. 1), London, 1890, the Martyrs of Palestine appears as an appendix to Book 8, pp.342-356.

77. Barnes, Constantine and Eusebius, p.150.

78. Ibid., p.154.

79. See above, n.76. It may be argued that it is time for a new Syriac edition of this important text.

80. Cureton, p.vii.

81. In the following list, the Syriac manuscript pages are given only when the Syriac text supplies vital information not found in the short Greek text.

82. πλείστοι ὅσοι τῶν ἐπιχωρίων ἐκκλησιῶν ἀρχοντες.
McGiffert translates this as "many rulers of the country churches", which implies rural parishes, but if οἱ ἐπιχώριοι are the native population of a country, τὸ ἐπιχώριον is the local custom (see H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, New ed. rev. and aug. by H. S. Jones, Oxford, 1940, p.566) and ἐπιχώριος as an adjective indicates something in or of a country or district. It would seem therefore that "local" is the best modern English word to use for the sense here. Eusebius means to indicate the churches of the province of Palestine, not "country churches" out in agricultural districts.

83. Certain "natives of Palestine" were condemned to pugilistic combat in the arena, a group which probably included Agapius and Thecla (iii.1 cf. v.1-7) from Gaza. However, Thecla is called a "Phrygian" (Syr. MS., p.11) and "together with the rest of the Phrygians" (also from Gaza?) she is martyred in Caesarea. It seems unlikely that the term refers to their original provenance, as Eusebius implies that they are all Palestinians, but rather to theology; Eusebius knows Montanism as "the Phrygian heresy" (Hist. Eccles. iv.27; v.16, 18, 19; vi.20). The Phrygians here are therefore most likely to be Montanists. Their identity as such is entirely omitted from the short Greek recension.

84. Several Tannaim and one of the Amoraim lived in Eleutheropolis (GRP, p.38; EAEHL I, p.19f). The synagogue north of the Crusader city in Caesarea is from the third century (EAEHL I, p.271). Later synagogues and/or literary sources testify to Jewish communities also in Scythopolis, Gaza, Diospolis, Ptolemais, Jamnia, Azotus, Jericho, Batanaea. It should be noted that Nicopolis and Neapolis had large Samaritan populations in their territory. This does not mean that the Samaritans who became Christians automatically became sectarian, theologically heterodox "Samaritan-Christians" even if at times they did still practice circumcision, pace Bagatti, Circumcision, p.19.

85. See above, n.11, and also: H. W. Basser, "Allusions to Christian and Gnostic Practices in Talmudic

Tradition", JSS 12, 1981, pp.87-105.

86. B. Bagatti, The Church from the Gentiles in Palestine (Eng. transl. by E. Hoade of L'Église de la Gentilé en Palestine, adapted from an Italian manuscript by A. Storme, Jerusalem, 1968), Jerusalem, 1971, repr. 1984, p.41.

87. Cf. 2 Kings 17; Josephus, Ant. ix.288-291. See J. A. Montgomery, The Samaritans: The Earliest Jewish Sect, Their History, Theology and Literature, Philadelphia, 1907, p.48ff.

88. The Samaritans considered themselves the original Israelites from whom the Jews split in a schism after Eli moved the ark of the covenant from Shechem (Neapolis) to Shiloh, see: R. Pummer, The Samaritans, Leiden, 1987, p.31. For use of the term "Israelites" see: A. T. Kraabel, "New Evidence of the Samaritan Diaspora has been found on Delos", BA 47, 1984, pp.44-46; cf. R. T. Anderson, "Samaritan History during the Renaissance" in A. D. Crown (ed.), The Samaritans, Tübingen, 1989, pp.95-112, at p.105. While Samaritans called themselves Bene Israel or שְׁמֵרִים "observant ones", the Jews called them שְׁמֶרֹנִים "people from Samaria" or Kutim, regarding them as being intermixed with Cuthaeans from Mesopotamia who settled in Israel after the Assyrian invasion.

89. In Ezra 4 the Samaritans' forebears are not permitted to help restore the Temple.

90. It is now clear that Baba Rabba did not live in the fourth century, as was previously thought, see B. Hall, "From John Hyrcanus to Baba Rabbah", in Crown (ed.), Samaritans, pp.33-54, at pp.53-54.

91. For a history of the Samaritans in the Byzantine period, see: A. D. Crown, "Samaritans in the Byzantine Orbit", in Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester 69, 1986, pp.96-138.

92. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.241-242.

93. Montgomery, p.112f.

94. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.243.

95. GRP, p.61.

96. R. Anderson, "Mount Gerizim: Navel of the World", BA 43, 1980, pp.218-219. The reference to the sanctuary of Zeus Hypsistos comes from Marinus of Neapolis, see: M. Stern, Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism, Jerusalem, 1980, pp.673-674 (no.543).

97. For a summary of recent excavations and thought on the matter, see; R. Pummer, "Samaritan Material Remains and Archaeology", in Crown (ed.), Samaritans, pp.135-177, at pp.166-169. Pummer mainly relies on oral information from Y. Magen, who excavated here in 1984.
98. Y. Magen, "A Fortified City from the Hellenistic Period on Mount Gerizim", Qadmoniot 19, 1986, pp.91-101 (Hebrew).
99. Awartha: GRP, p.33, M. Avi-Yonah, Map of Roman Palestine, 2nd ed. (henceforth MRP), Jerusalem, 1946, p.24 - the tomb of a certain Pinhas has been found here; Decatus: MRP, p.24; Hivria: GRP, p.65; Kiryat Hagga/Hajja: MRP, p.25 - there was a Samaritan synagogue here; Kefar Qalil, Anderson, p.220; Macher: GRP, p.76; Platanus: GRP, p.88, MRP, p.24 - there was a Samaritan place of worship at the crossroads and a sacred tree as well as a synagogue; Rujeib: Anderson, p.220; Salem (Sanim): GRP, p.92, MRP, p.26; Sychar: Anderson, p.220.
100. Pummer, "Material Remains", pp.136-140.
101. Ibid., pp.145-147. The decalogue inscription placed upside down in the southern wall of the minaret was defaced beyond recognition during renovations to the mosque in 1980.
102. Silet edh-Dhar/Kefar Sila: GRP, p.73; Anabtah: GRP, p.28; Tur Kerem: GRP, p.102; Jeshub: GRP, p.70; Socho: GRP, p.97; Zeita: GRP, p.103; Qedumim: Y. Magen, "Qedumim - A Samaritan Site of the Roman-Byzantine Period", Qadmoniot 16, 1983, pp.76-83 (Hebrew), Pummer, "Material Remains", pp.162-165; Beth Dagon: GRP, p.37.
103. GRP, p.48.
104. GRP, p.100.
105. EAEHL IV, pp.1070-1071 and see: J. Strugnell, "Quelques inscriptions Samaritaines", RE 74, 1967, pp.556-559.
106. GRP, p.97. E. L. Sukenik, "The Samaritan Synagogue at Salbit: Preliminary Report", Bulletin of the Louis M. Rabinowitz Fund for the Exploration of Ancient Synagogues 1, 1919, pp.26-29. The building is probably fourth-fifth century, but there may well be an earlier synagogue beneath it.
107. See Pummer, "Material Remains", p.154.
108. R. Barkay, "A Roman-Period Samaritan Burial from Talluze", BAIAS 7, 1987-8, pp.8-20.

109. V. Sussman, "Samaritan Lamps of the Third and Fourth Centuries A.D.", IEJ 28, 1978, pp.238-250. For Tel Arshuf, see: EAEHL IV, p.1168 and V. Sussman, "The Samaritan Oil Lamps from Apollonia-Arsuf", Tel Aviv 10, 1983, pp.71-96.
110. It is at Tel Istaba (197 213). The Samaritan letters probably represent a Greek text, so J. Naveh, "A Greek Dedication in Samaritan Letters", IEJ 32, 1981, pp.220-222. The synagogue was built at the end of the fourth century but may indicate that a Samaritan community was long in existence in Scythopolis.
111. EAEHL I, p.271.
112. For the lamps here see: Sussman, p.238. For Samaritan amulets in general see: J. Kaplan, "Two Samaritan Amulets", IEJ 17, 1967, pp.158-160; idem, "A Second Samaritan Amulet from Tel Aviv", IEJ 25, 1975, pp.157-159; EAEHL IV, p.1074. R. Pummer ("Samaritan Amulets from the Roman-Byzantine Period and their Wearers", RB 94, 1987, pp.251-263) argues that the existence of Samaritan amulets does not necessarily indicate the presence of Samaritans since these were worn by Christians and Jews as well as Samaritans. (Pummer gives a complete list of Samaritan amulets which updates that of J. Kaplan in "A Samaritan Amulet from Corinth", IEJ 30, 1980, pp.196-198, at p.198.) J. Naveh, however ("Lamp Inscriptions and Inverted Writing", IEJ 38, 1988, pp.36-43) thinks there is no reason why Samaritan amulets were not produced primarily for Samaritans, even though other ethnic groups might have worn them on occasion.
113. For the history of the debate about whether the building was a church or a synagogue, see Pummer, "Material Remains", pp.144-145.
114. M. Kochavi, "The History and Archaeology of Aphek/Antipatris: A Biblical City in the Sharon Plain", BA 44, 1981, pp.75-86.
115. EAEHL I, p.119.
116. Anderson, p.219.
117. EAEHL III, p.925.
118. D. Flusser, "Paganism in Palestine" in S. Safrai and M. Stern, with D. Flusser and W. C. van Unnik (eds), The Jewish People in the First Century, Vol. 2, Assen/Amsterdam, 1976, p.1065.
119. Ibid., p.1080.
120. Urbach, pp.149-165.

121. J. Geffcken, The Last Days of Graeco-Roman Paganism, transl. by S. MacCormack, Amsterdam/New York, 1978, p.85.
122. J. C. Mann, Legionary Recruitment and Veteran Settlement during the Principate (Inst. Arch. Occasional Publication, no.7), London, 1983. 800 veterans were settled in Emmaus, north-west of Jerusalem, after the first Jewish War (p.41).
123. The term was used from Ovid (Met. iv.46) onwards.
124. Photius (Bibl. 242) records that the people of Palestine worshipped Greek gods, citing Asclepiodotus.
125. W. Tarn and G. T. Griffith, Hellenistic Civilisation, 3rd ed., London, 1952, pp.341-342.
126. Flusser, "Paganism", pp.1070-1071.
127. A. Berthier and R. Charlier, La sanctuaire punique d'El Hofra à Constantine, Paris, 1955, pp.83-84, no.102; J. Xeixidor, The Pagan God, Princeton, N.J., 1977, p.22, n.10.
128. M. Avi-Yonah, Oriental Art in Palestine, Rome, 1961, p.57, cf. J. R. Bartlett, "From Edomites to Nabataeans: A Study in Continuity", PEQ, 1979, pp.53-66.
129. A. Negev, Nabataean Archaeology Today, New York, 1986.
130. N. Glueck, Deities and Dolphins, London, 1965, p.56.
131. EAEHL I, p.219.
132. Goodman, p.48.
133. J. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims Before the Crusades, Warminster, 1977, p.33.
134. Tel 'Erani: EAEHL I, p.89; Gezer: EAEHL II, p.438; Paneas: see J. Murphy-O'Connor, The Holy Land, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1986, p.155.
135. In Palestinian folk tradition el-Hadr is a healing spirit of enormous power, see T. Canaan, Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine, Jerusalem, 1927, pp.120-125; A. Augustinovic, "El-Khader" e il Profeta Elia, Jerusalem, 1971.
136. Canaan, pp.1-84. A briefer catalogue of sites, though one which traces their very ancient roots, was provided by L. B. Paton, "Survivals of Primitive Religion in Modern Palestine", AASOR 1, 1919-20, pp.51-65.

137. Goodman, p.207, n.105.
138. M. A. R. Colledge, "Interpretatio Romana: the Semitic Position of Syria and Mesopotamia", in M. Henig and A. King (eds), Pagan Gods and Shrines of the Roman Empire, Oxford, 1986, pp.221-230, at p.221. Colledge notes that throughout the East ancient semitic forms of religion lived on: "Any particular centre might possess all these forms, from the worship of stones and springs to a 'Lord' and 'Lady' or only some of them", p.225.
139. Goodman, p.208, n.147. Goodman is surely correct (n.148) that S. Leiberman's suggestion that Mercury was identified with Hermes Trimegistus of the magical papyri is far-fetched, cf. S. Leiberman, "Palestine in the Third and Fourth Centuries", JQR 36, 1946, pp.329-370 (Part 1); 37, 1946, pp.31-54 (Part 2), at 37, 1946, p.46, 53-54. Unl
140. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.36.
141. Comm. by R. J. Bull, IEJ 23, 1973, pp.260-262; idem, "A Mithraic Medallion from Caesarea", IEJ 24, 1974, pp.187-190.
142. MRP, p.32.
143. For a discussion concerning an earlier period see: E. Schürer, A History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, Vol. II, edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black, Edinburgh, 1979, pp.85-183. In the following note, to avoid repeating the information in Avi-Yonah's Gazetteer of Roman Palestine, only discoveries, reports and volumes published after 1976 will be given, though there are occasional exceptions in the case of material which Avi-Yonah did not cover.
144. GRP, p.25; comm. by W. H. Mare, BA 45, 1982, pp.57-58.
145. GRP, p.26.
146. MRP, p.8; GRP, pp.69-70; comm. by N. Avigad, IEJ 20, 1970, pp.136-137; idem, IEJ 21, 1971, pp.168-169; EAEHL II, pp.612-613; Wilkinson, pp.95-106; R. Rosenthal, "Late Roman and Byzantine Bone Carvings from Palestine", IEJ 26, 1976, pp.96-103, at p.100; A. Ovadiah and S. Mucznik, "Orpheus from Jerusalem - Pagan or Christian Image?", in L. I. Levine (ed.), The Jerusalem Cathedra: Studies in the History, Archaeology, Geography and Ethnography of the Land of Israel, Vol. I, Jerusalem/Detroit, 1981, pp.152-166, cf. J. B. Friedman, "Syncretism and Allegory in the Jerusalem Orpheus Mosaic", Traditio 23, 1967, pp.1-13; B. Rosen, "Reidentified Animals in the 'Orpheus Mosaic' from Jerusalem", IEJ 35, 1985, pp.182-183; J.

Gath and L. Y. Rahmani, "A Roman Tomb at Manahat, Jerusalem", IEJ 27, 1977, pp.209-214.

147. GRP, p.26; MRP, p.16.

148. Comm. by M. Kochavi, IEJ 27, 1977, p.55; idem, IEJ 35, 1985, p.121; EAEHL I, pp.72-73.

149. Flusser, "Paganism", pp.1070-1072; MRP, p.18.

150. GRP, p.32; Flusser, "Paganism", p.1076; Rosenthal, p.100; EAEHL I, pp.127-129.

151. GRP, p.32.

152. GRP, p.34; MRP, p.27.

153. G. Barkay, Z. Ilan, A. Kloner, A. Mazar, D. Urman, "Archaeological Survey of the Northern Bashan (Preliminary Report)", IEJ 24, 1974, pp.173-184; M. Ben Dov, "A Lintel from the Bashan depicting Three Deities", IEJ, 24, 1974, pp.185-186.

154. GRP, p.39; EAEHL I, p.201.

155. GRP, p.43; MRP, p.19.

156. GRP, p.44; MRP, p.5; comm by A. Ovadiah, M. Fisher, I Roll, IEJ 33, 1983, pp.110-111, 254; idem, IEJ 35, 1985, p.189; idem, "The Roman Temple at Kedesh, Upper Galilee: A Preliminary Study", Tel Aviv 11, 1984, pp.146-172; M. Aviam, "The Roman Temple at Kedesh in the Light of Certain Northern Syrian City Coins", Tel Aviv, 12, 1985, pp.212-214.

157. G. Finkielsztejn, "Asklepios Leontoukhos et le mythe de la coupe de Césarée Maritime", RB 93, 1986, pp.419-428; R. Gersht, "The Tyche of Caesarea Maritima", PEQ 1984, pp.110-114; GRP, p.44; MRP, pp.12-13; C. Vermeule and K. Anderson, "Greek and Roman Sculpture in the Holy Land", The Burlington Magazine 123, 1981, pp.7-19 at p.11, 19; L. I. Levine, Caesarea under Roman Rule, Leiden, 1975, esp. p.57; J. Germer-Durand, "Inscriptions romaines et byzantines de Palestine", RB 4, 1895, p.75f; M. Avi-Yonah, "The Caesarea Porphyry Statue", IEJ 20, 1970, pp.203-208 cf. P. R. Diplock, "The Date of Askalon's Sculptured Panels and an Identification of the Caesarea Statues", PEQ, 1971, pp.13-16 and idem, "Further Comment on 'An Identification of the Caesarea Statues'", PEQ, 1975, pp.165-166; EAEHL I, p.271; comm. by R. Bull, IEJ 24, 1974, pp.280-282; K. G. Holum et al, King Herod's Dream: Caesarea on the Sea, New York/London, 1988, p.107ff; L. I. Levine, Roman Caesarea, Jerusalem, 1975, pp.18-23.

158. GRP, p.47.
159. MRP, p.7; Rosenthal, p.100; Flusser, "Paganism", p.1072; M. Avi-Yonah, "Mount Carmel and the God of Baalbek", IEJ 2, 1952, pp.118-124.
160. Comm by A. Biran, IEJ 26, 1976, p.205.
161. Daphne may have been located precisely at the site of Dan, in which case the temple of a male deity noted above at Dan is possibly that to which Josephus refers.
162. Glueck, p.48f.
163. GRP, p.15; Glueck, p.61f.
164. GRP, p.51; MRP, p.19.
165. GRP, p.52.
166. Ibid; MRP, p.14; EAEHL I, p.335; comm. by E. Stern, IEJ 30, 1986, p.101; idem, IEJ 30, 1980, pp.209-213.
167. GRP, p.53; EAEHL II, p.345.
168. S. Saller, Discoveries at St. John's, Ein Karim 1941-1942, Jerusalem, 1946.
169. Schumacher, pp.82-85.
170. D. Urman, "Beth Guvrin: A History of a Mixed Population", in E. Stern and D. Urman (eds), Man and Environment in the Southern Shephalah, Tel Aviv, 1988, pp.151-162 (Hebrew); A. Kloner, "The Amphitheatre of Beth-Guvrin/Eleutheropolis", Qadmoniot 18, 1985, pp.38-43 (Hebrew: Eng. transl. IEJ 38, 1988, pp.15-24.
171. P. Mayerson, "The City of Elusa in the Literary Sources of the Fourth to Sixth Centuries", IEJ 33, 1983, pp.247-253.
172. GRP, p.54; EAEHL II, p.469, 473; Wilkinson, p.81; Y. Hirshfeld and G. Solar, "The Roman Thermae at Hammat Gader: Preliminary Report of Three Seasons of Excavations", IEJ 31, 1981, pp.197-219.
173. GRP, p.58; Y. Meshorer, "A Ring from Gadara", IEJ 29, 1979, pp.221-222.
174. EAEHL II, p.408, 417; Flusser, "Paganism", p.1073; A. Kasher, "Gaza during the Greco-Roman Era", Levine (ed.), The Jerusalem Cathedral, Vol. 2, 1982, pp.63-78. The symbol of Marnas (✝) was very like a cross. Kasher also has a picture of a coin showing the goddess Io and the city stretching out their hands to one another

(p.74).

175. GRP, p.61; EAEHL II, pp.417-426; A. Ovadiah, "Was the Cult of Dushara-Dusares practised in Hippos-Susita>", PEQ, 1981, p.101-104; I. Browning, Jerash and the Decapolis, London, 1982, pp.35-38; A. Segal, "Gerasa - An Archaeological-Historical Review", Qadmoniot 19, 1986, pp.12-22 (Hebrew).

176. EAEHL II, pp.459-460. 300 m. west of a Byzantine monastery compound there is a small tel known as Tel el-Kursi, occupied in the Roman and Byzantine periods as well as in the Crusader period. This has not yet been excavated. The Soncino edition of the Talmud identifies the House of Nebo with Gerasa rather than Gergesa, but this seems to be a rationalisation. The Palestinian Talmud records that Gamaliel of Kounteh was burnt by the townspeople of Gergesa (j.M.Kat. 82c) which would be in keeping with Gergesa being a pagan town, and not a Jewish one; see: V. Tzaferis, The Excavations of Kursi-Gergesa (Atiqot: English Series 16), Jerusalem, 1983, pp.41-46.

177. The position of Gilgal has not been fixed with certainty.

178. Dauphin and Schonfield, p.207; Schumacher, pp.177-179; M. Kochavi, Judea, Samaria and the Golan (Archaeological Survey of Israel, no.53), Jerusalem, 1973, p.264 (Hebrew).

179. L. Y. Rahmani, "A Lead Coffin from the Hefer Valley", IEJ 24, 1974, pp.124-127.

180. S. Dar and J. Mintzker, "A Roman Temple at Senaim, Mount Hermon", EI 19, 1987, pp.30-45 (Hebrew); comm. by S. Dar, IEJ 36, 1986, pp.99-100; idem, "The History of the Hermon Settlements", PEQ, 1988, pp.26-44.

181. GRP, p.65; EAEHL II, p.522; Glueck, pp. 13-14, 24, 315-319, 359-160, 381, 392; A. Ovadiah, "The Cult of Dushara", p.103.

182. Flusser, "Paganism", pp.1080-1083.

183. GRP, p.72; MRP, p.25.

184. Glueck, p.59.

185. G. S. Merker, "A Statuette of Minerva in the Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem", EI 19, 1987, pp.15-20.

186. Glueck, p.60.

187. Ibid., p.48.

188. MRP, p.6.
189. Glueck, p.59.
190. EAEHL IV, pp.1152-1159.
191. Wilkinson, p.165.
192. GRP, p.74; A. Negev (ed.), Archaeological Encyclopaedia of the Holy Land, rev. ed. Nashville/Camden, N.Y., 1986, pp.220-221; Rosenthal, p.100; L. Y. Rahmani, "A Roman Patera from Lajjun", IEJ 31, 1981, pp.190-196.
193. Glueck, p.59.
194. Ibid., p.60.
195. A. Avi-Yonah, The Madaba Mosaic Map, Jerusalem, 1954, p.41.
196. EAEHL III, p.728; Rosenthal, p.100; A. Negev, "The Nabataean Necropolis of Mampsis (Kurnub)", IEJ 21, 1971, pp.110-129.
197. EAEHL III, pp.791-792.
198. GRP, p.44; D. Flusser, "The Great Goddess of Samaria," IEJ 25, 1975, pp.13-20.
199. GRP, p.44.
200. Ibid., p.86.
201. Ferguson, p.17, 20; P. J. Parr, "Recent Discoveries at Petra", PEQ 89, 1957, pp.5-16; I. Browning, Petra, London, 1973, pp.154-164; Glueck, p.63.
202. GRP, p.87; EAEHL IV, p.990.
203. GRP, p.89; MRP, pp.6-7; Flusser, "Paganism", p.1094; M. Avi-Yonah, "Syrian Gods at Ptolemais-Acco", IEJ 9, 1959, pp.1-12.
204. Glueck, pp.56-57.
205. GRP, p.90.
206. EAEHL III, p.996.
207. GRP, p.90; D. Barag, "An Epitaph of the Fifth Century A.D. from the Raphia Area", IEJ 24, 1974, pp.128-131.

208. Comm. by P. J. Parr, RB 76, 1969, p.393.
209. GRP, pp.94-95; MRP, p.30; EAEHL I, p.221; Flusser, pp.1066-1067, 1084, 1086; Vermeule and Anderson, p.19; comm. by F. Vitto, IEJ 30, 1980, p.214; A. Ovadiah and I. Roll, "A Greek Dedicatory Inscription to Azeizos", EI 19, 1987, pp.270-271 (Hebrew: Eng. transl. in IEJ 38, 1988, pp.270-271); Y. Tsafrir, "More Evidence for the Cult of Zeus Akraios at Beth-Shean", EI 19, 1987, pp.282-283 (Hebrew).
210. GRP, p.94; EAEHL IV, p.1048; E. M. Smallwood, The Jews under Roman Rule from Pompey to Diocletian, Leiden, 1976, p.490; Flusser, "Great Goddess"; Sussman, "Reḥob", p.153.
211. GRP, p.94.
212. Comm. by J. Elgavish, IEJ 20, 1970, p.230.
213. Pers. comm. Y. Magen; EAEHL III, pp.776-777; Julius Africanus, Frag. 19; Eusebius, Dem. Evang. ix, cf. Hist. Eccles. x.18; Socrates, Vita Const. iii.53; E. Mader, Mambre: Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen im Heiligen Bezirk Ramet el-Halil in Sudpalästina, 1926-1928, 2 vols, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1957, see esp. Pl. LXXIV, LXXIII; M. Smith, "On the Wine God in Palestine", in Salo Wittmayer Barom Jubilee Volume (American Academy for Jewish Research), Jerusalem 1975, pp.815-829, at p.826.
214. MRP, p.20.
215. While this is on display at the Rockefeller Museum, it does not appear to have been published.
216. See N. Jidejian, Tyre through the Ages, Beirut, 1969, p.94ff.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Alistair Kee has pointed out the inadequacy of this term, for Constantine was simply exchanging divine patronage from the sun god to the god of the Christians: Constantine versus Christ, London, 1982, pp.13-14.
2. Robin Lane Fox, Pagans and Christians, Harmondsworth, 1986, pp.614-616.
3. Ibid, p.616.
4. Kee, p.22.
5. See Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. ix.7.8-9. The rescript of Maximin points to the Christians as inciting the wrath

of the gods, who then caused crop failures, war, storms at sea, hurricanes and earthquakes to express their fury.

6. T. D. Barnes, p.191.
7. J. B. Bury, History of The Later Roman Empire, Vol. I, 1st ed. reprinted New York, 1958, p.366.
8. Lane Fox, p.609.
9. Ibid, p.592.
10. Robert Browning, The Emperor Julian, London, 1975, p.165.
11. Joseph Vogt, "Pagans and Christians in the Family of Constantine the Great", in A. Momigliano (ed.), The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century, Oxford, 1963, pp.38-55.
12. See Gaston Boissier, La Fin du Paganisme, Paris, 1898; E. Chastel, Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme dans l'Empire Orient, Paris, 1850; J. N. Hillgarth (ed.), Christianity and Paganism, 350-750, Philadelphia, 1986; Ramsay MacMullen, Christianising the Roman Empire (AD100-400), New Haven/London, 1984; see also: Lane Fox, pp.609-663; Bury, pp.365-377; A. H. M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire, 284-602, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1964, pp.938-941.
13. C. ^hFarr, The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions, Princeton, NJ, 1952, p.476.
14. Jones, p.938.
15. G. Fowden, "Between Pagans and Christians," JRS 78, 1988, pp.173-182, at p.179.
16. Lewis and Short, p.1290. Ferguson, p.65.
17. J. N. Hillgarth, "The Attempt to Convert the Countryside", in Christianity and Paganism, edited by Hillgarth, p.54ff.
18. R. Browning, p.160.
19. Encyclopaedia of Islam, new ed., Leiden/London, 1960, Vol. 2, p.270; Vol. 3, p.964-965.
20. J. Burckhardt, Die Zeit Constantins des Grossen, Basel, 1853; 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1880.
21. A. Piganiol, L'Empereur Constantin, Paris, 1932.
22. A. H. M. Jones, Constantine and the Conversion of Europe, London, 1949, p.248.

23. Kee, see above, n.1.
24. N. H. Baynes, "Constantine the Great and the Christian Church", (Raleigh Lecture on History, 1929) in Proceedings of the British Academy, Vol. XV, London, 1930, pp.95-103; 2nd ed. as separate volume, London, 1972.
25. Bury, p.368.
26. Baynes, p.9ff.
27. Lane Fox, pp.642-662.
28. Translation by McGiffert, p.507.
29. Paul Keresztes, "Constantine: Called by Divine Providence", in Studia Patristica XVIII: Papers of the 1983 Oxford Patristics Conference, ed. E. A. Livingstone, Vol. I, Kalamazoo, Mich., 1985, pp.48.
30. Julian, Ep. lxxviii.
31. Eusebius, Vita Const. iii.56; cf. Philostr. V. Ap. i.13.30.
32. See also: Barnes, Constantine and Eusebius, p.210-211; idem, "Constantine and the Christians of Persia", JRS 75, 1985, pp.126-136, at 130-131.
33. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.35.
34. Lane Fox, p.41.
35. Ibid.
36. Jerome, Ep. xlvi, PL 22, 207, translation here from G. Dalman, Sacred Sites and Ways, London, 1935, transl. by P. P. Levertoff of Orte unde Wege Jesu, 3rd ed., p.43.
37. Lane Fox, p.622.
38. Ibid, p.623.
39. See Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.33.
40. E. D. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460, Oxford, 1984, pp.77-78, 94.
41. The early view of Eusebius that Palestine was not an area of spiritual significance, despite his interest in it, and the modifications of his view following Constantine, have been explored by P. W. L. Walker, in "Fourth Century Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the

Holy Land: A Comparison of Eusebius of Caesarea and Cyril of Jerusalem", unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Cambridge, 1986, see especially pp.2-51.

42. See Wilken, "The Restoration of Israel", p.446.

43. Eusebius, Mart. Pal., ix.6-14.

44. Lane Fox, p.98-167.

45. Ibid, p.674.

46. Ibid, p.678.

47. R. P. C. Hanson has argued that pagan temples themselves were not appropriated as Christian churches until the middle of the fifth century because they were looked upon with such horror that they had to be utterly destroyed before the site was used ("The Transformation of Pagan Temples into Churches in the Early Christian Centuries", PEQ, 1978, pp.257-267). He uses as an example Constantine's basilica in Jerusalem which was constructed only after the Hadrianic temple of Venus had been dismantled down to its foundations (Eusebius, Vita Const. iii.26-9). However, a chapel built in the fourth century over a corner of the abandoned temple of Artemis at Sardis is testimony to an early pragmatism on the part of Christians when faced with the task of appropriating temples. The temple of Apollo at Daphne, a suburb of Antioch, was subverted rather than converted, c.358, by means of the erection of a church built immediately in front of it by Julian's half-brother Gallus. Later in the fourth century the Bishop of Alexandria wanted to make the temple of Dionysus into a church and asked the Emperor Theodosius to assign it to him. Pagans protested by occupying the Serapeum, which eventually led the emperor to condemn all the temples there to be destroyed as punishment (Rufinus, Hist. Eccles. ii.22ff; Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. vii.15). Early in the fifth century, it was necessary only to use the sign of the cross to purify a pagan cult place before it was used as a church (Cod. Theod. xvi.10.25). During the fifth century, temples continued to be re-employed as churches, for example: the temple of Apollo at Didyma, or the temple of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias. By doing this, the Church effectively destroyed all pagan rites, but was also able to utilise the abiding sanctity of the location to attract adherents.

48. EAEHL II, pp.426-428.

49. EAEHL IV, p.939. See above, note 47.

50. EAEHL II, pp.345-354.

51. See above, p.83.
52. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. vii.
53. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xiii; Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. xiv; Hugeburc, Vita Will. 97.1.
54. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xliii; Epiph. Mon., Hag. vi.14-19; Dicuil, De Mens. 24-25.
55. Comm. by C. M. Dauphin, Notes and News, IEJ 35, 1985, p.271.
56. M. Guarducci, The Tomb of St. Peter, London, 1960, p.87. There is a possible reference to Peter's tomb by Tertullian (On Modesty xxi).
57. Midrash Ps. 16:2. Translation by Peter Brown, The Cult of the Saints, London, 1983, p.3.
58. P. Brown, p.3.
59. See J. Jeremias, Heiligengräber in Jesu Umwelt, Göttingen, 1958, for a full discussion of venerable Jewish graves.
60. Avi-Yonah, Madaba Mosaic, pp.32-33.
61. Of the three places he mentions, only the Temple Mount was left untouched by the Church, and only because the sight of Jews coming to lament over the ruins there served as more excellent propaganda than would any new edifice, cf. Bordeaux Pilgrim, It. Burd. 591.4; Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat. x.11; xv.15; Jerome, Contra Soph. i.15; Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. i.1.2.
62. T. B. Jones, In the Twilight of Antiquity, Minneapolis, 1978, p.21.
63. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. v.
64. Jerome mentions that it was a Jew who showed him the birthplace of Nahum the Elkosite, Prol. in Naum, PL 25, 1232. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.221.
65. Leo Grammaticus, p.114; George Cedrenus, Comp. Hist. (in I. Bekkero (ed.), CSHB I, Bonn, 1838, p.614).
66. Ep. lviii, PL 22, 888.
67. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.221.
68. John Cassian, Collationes xiv:8.
69. Cyril of Scythopolis, Vita Sabas lvii.

70. Avi-Yonah, The Jews, p.221.
71. See Josephus, Ant. i.186; B.J. iv.533; Jerome, Com. in Jer. xxxi; Chron. Pasch. xix; m.Ma'asar Shenit 5:2; Sifre Deut. 306; j.A.Z. i:39d; Judith 1:9; Cant. Rab. 4f.
72. Murphy-O'Connor, p.277.
73. Mader, Pl. LXXIV. See also: M. Smith, "On the Wine God in Palestine", p.826.
74. Mader, Pl. LXXIII.
75. Y. Magen, pers. comm. Magen has found pottery dating to the Mameluke period, which shows that Mamre continued to be important. He thinks that the sacred enclosure was at the centre of a Roman town. The remains of a large Roman public house were found 200 m west at Haman Sa'ar.
76. Hunt, pp.102-103.
77. Mader, p.48.
78. They never succeeded in taking over the site completely. It became known as the "double cave" because Christians would use one half of the enclosure and Jews the other (Theodosius, De Situ v; Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. ix; cf. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xxx.)
79. Bordeaux Pilgrim, Itin. Burd. 599.
80. The remains of the Herodian shrine were incorporated into^{the} Constantinian structure (cf. EAEHL III, p.776-777). For the Constantinian building see: A. Ovadiah, A Corpus of the Byzantine Churches in the Holy Land, Bonn, 1970, p.131; J. W. Crowfoot, Early Churches in Palestine, London, 1941, pp.35-36.
81. Other literary material used as evidence for Christian pilgrimage in the third century will be discussed in relevant places below.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. For Bethlehem, its history and archaeology, with particular reference to the Church of the Nativity, see: Bagatti, Gli antichi edifici sacri di Betlemme, idem, "Recenti scavi a Betlemme", LA 18, 1968, pp.181-237; R. W. Hamilton, The Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, 1947; W. Harvey, Structural Survey of the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Oxford, 1937; Murphy-

O'Connor, pp. 165-171; L. -H. Vincent and F. M. Abel, Bethléem, le Sanctuaire de la Nativité, Paris, 1914; L. -H. Vincent, "Bethléem: Le Sanctuaire de la Nativité", RB, 45, 1936, pp.544-574; R. Weir Schultz (ed.), The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, London, 1910; J. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.151-152.

2. See Dem. Evang. iii.2; vii.2; Vita Const. iii.42f, and cf. Epiphanius Pan. li.9; lxxviii.15; Socrates, Hist. Eccles. i.17; Sozomen, Hist. Eccles. ii.2.

3. Cf. Ep. cxlvii:4.

4. Peter Welten, "Bethlehem und die Klage um Adonis", ZDPV 99, 1983, pp.189-203, especially p.200.

5. See L. Kötzsche-Breitenbruch, "Zur Ikonographie des Bethlehemitischen Kindermordes in der frühchristlichen Kunst", JAC 11/12, 1968-69, pp.104-115.

6. For the origins of Christian artistic representation in Graeco-Roman models see the series by F. Dölger, Antike und Christentum, Münster, 1929-1950.

7. Pierre Maraval, Lieux Saints et Pèlerinages d'Orient, Paris, 1985, p.53.

8. B. Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.133-134; idem "Gerusalemme e Betlemme negli antichi mosaici", TS 39, 1963, pp.101-105; I. Mancini, "A proposito della profanazione pagana della Grotta della Natività", TS 42, 1966, pp.265-268; idem, Archaeological Discoveries, p.162-165; Testa, "Grotte dei Misteri", pp.65-144.

9. Weir Schultz (ed.), The Church of the Nativity, p.73.

10. Ferguson, pp.47-48.

11. Weir Schultz (ed.), The Church of the Nativity, p.73; Dalman, Sacred Sites and Ways, p.40; H. J. Van-Lennep, Bible Lands, their Modern Customs and Manners Illustrative of Scripture, London, 1875, p.417; H. P. Tristram, Eastern Customs in Bible Lands, London, 1894, p.112.

12. O. Cullmann in NTA I, pp.370-371.

13. Ibid, p.372.

14. Vincent and Abel, Bethléem, p.9.

15. Cullmann, NTA I, p.406.

16. M. R. James, The Apocryphal New Testament,

Oxford, 1924, p.84.

17. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.163.

18. Y. Aharoni, Excavations at Ramat Rahel, Seasons 1959 and 1960, Rome, 1962, pp.4, 24-27; idem, Excavations at Ramat Rahel, Seasons 1961 and 1962, Rome, 1964; pp.38-40, 60-82.

19. Chadwick, Origen: Contra Celsum, pp.47-48.

20. So Vincent and Abel, Bethléem, pp.13-14.

21. See R. Payne-Smith, Thesaurus Syriacus, I, Oxford, 1879, cols. 35, 40.

22. It should be remembered that this was written before the site's development by Constantine.

23. Vincent and Abel, Bethléem, pp.4-5.

24. See Midrash Rabbah, transl. eds.: H. Freedman and M. Simon, Vol. vii, Lamentations, transl. A. Cohen, London and Bournemouth, 1951.

25. Encyclopaedia Judaica 16, cols. 517-518.

26. Spicilegium Syriacum, ed. W. Cureton, Leiden, 1855, pp.22-35.

27. See W. W. Baudissin, Adonis und Esmun, Leipzig, 1855, pp.22-35.

28. See: R. Graves, The Greek Myths I, Harmondsworth, 1955, pp.72-73; E. O. James, Myth and Ritual in the Ancient Near East, London, 1958, pp.44-45; S. Langdon, Tammuz and Ishtar, Oxford, 1914; A. Moorgate, Tammuz, Berlin, 1949; H. A. Strong and J. Garstang, The Syrian Goddess, London, 1913.

29. T. Jacobsen, Toward the Image of Tammuz and Other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture, ed. W. L. Moran, Cambridge, Mass., 1970, pp.77, 80.

30. Jacobsen, pp.87-88.

31. Ch. Vellay, Le Culte et les Fêtes d'Adonis-Thammouz dans l'Orient Antique, (Annales du Musée Guimet, Bibl. d'Études XVI), Paris, 1904, pp.177-192.

32. Cf. Dalman, p.102.

CHAPTER SIX

1. These issues will be discussed in depth in a forthcoming book: S. Gibson and J. E. Taylor, The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem: Select Archaeological and Historical Problems, Sheffield, 1990.
2. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.134.
3. So J. Straubinger, Die Kreuzauffindungslegende, Paderborn, 1912. See also for the legend: B. Bagatti and E. Testa, Il Golgota e la Croce, Jerusalem, 1978, pp.142-145.
4. Hunt, pp.45-46.
5. Bagatti, Gentiles, p.23.
6. For a discussion of the so-called Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea see Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, in C. Warren and C. R. Conder, The Survey of Western Palestine, Jerusalem, 1884, pp.319-331. For a modern discussion: Amos Kloner, The Necropolis of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period, Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1980, pp.145-146.
7. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, p.167.
8. Basil of Caesarea, Com. in Isaiah v.141; John Chrysostom, Hom. in Joh. xix.16-18; Nonnus Panopolitanus, Para. Joh. xix; Pseudo-Tertullian, Carm. adv. Marcionem ii.4; Pseudo-Cyprian, Ad Cornelium; Ambrose, Ep. lxx.10; Exp. Luc. x; Pseudo-Augustine, Sermones Supposititii iv.5; Moses bar Kepha, De Paradiso i.14; Basil of Seleucia, Oration xxxviii.3; Eutychius, Annales i.911-918; George Hamartolos, Short Chronicle iv.236; Epiphanius the Monk, Itin. i.10-13.
9. Bagatti, "Note sull'iconografica di 'Adamo'"; I. Mancini, "Adamo sotto il Calvario", TS 41, 1965, p.277-282. Adam is shown coming out of a small coffin as Christ's blood strikes him.
10. Bagatti and Testa, Golgota, p.27.
11. J. H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, with a Supplement, Missoula, 1981, p.91; W. Budge, The Book of the Cave of Treasures, London, 1927, pp. xi, 21-23, 132, 230.
12. Cf. Sophronius, Anacreontica xx.29-30. See also: L. -H. Vincent and F. M. Abel, Jérusalem Nouvelle (Jérusalem: Recerches de topographie, d'archéologie et d'histoire II), Paris, 1914, p.224-225; Maraval, Lieux saints et pèlerinages, p.57.

13. L. Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews V, Philadelphia, 1955, p.117, p.126-127; cf. Klijn, Seth, p.9; J. Jeremias, Golgotha, Leipzig/Göttingen, 1926, p.34-39.
14. Bagatti, Gentiles, p.23.
15. A. M. Denis, Introduction aux Pseudépigraphes Grecs d'Ancien Testament, Leiden, 1970.
16. It is interesting that few have followed Jerome's scepticism. A notable exception was Bede, in Matt. xxvi. The theological appeal of the story which had Adam buried at Golgotha was immense.
17. Cf. Ep. cviii.11. For the tomb of Adam at Hebron see: b.Sota 13a; Josh. (Vulg.) 14:15; Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. ii.9.1-3. The placement of Adam's tomb here appears to be a late development based on the interpretation of the ancient name of Hebron, Kiryat 'Arba (Gen. 23:2) or "City of Four", to mean the three Patriarchs buried there and Adam, though local Christians believed that the fourth man was Caleb, cf. Jeremias, Heiligengräber, pp.96-99.
18. G. W. H. Lampe, A Patristic Greek Lexicon, Oxford, 1961, col. 1437, defines ὑπερανίσταμαι as literally meaning "stand up or project over" with a metaphorical meaning of "be superior to". The word has been translated by Ch. Coüasnon, in The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem (The Schweich Lectures, 1972), London, 1974, p.50, as "dominates". Hunt (p.12) uses the passage to say that the Rock of Calvary "stood above" the basilica, which is absurd. The top of the rock was only about 2 metres higher than the floor of the Martyrium, which was circa 756 m. above sea level; a measurement known from the maximum height of the rock ceiling (755.75) above the Cave of the Invention of the Cross, which the Martyrium covered.
19. Whether the source was written is doubtful. It may even have been a case of hearsay.
20. See G. Vermes, Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies, Leiden, 1961, p.209; Maimonides, Beit Abachria, Cap. 2
21. Pseudo-Augustine says that it is Jerome who learnt from the Jews that Isaac was offered at the place where Christ was crucified and that Adam was buried on the spot: a strange conflation of traditions.
22. Breviarius A:2; Theodosius, De Situ vii; Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xix.

23. See A. E. Harvey, "Melito and Jerusalem", JTS 17, 1966, pp.401-404.
24. L. Robert, Études Anatoliennes: Recherches sur les inscriptions grecques de l'Asie Mineure, Paris, 1937, pp.532-536. See also: J. Sauvaget, Alep: Essai sur le développement d'une grande ville syrienne, Paris, 1941, p.46; L. Robert, "Inscriptions Grecques de Sidè en Pamphylie", Revue de Philologie 3me série, 32, 1958, p.19; R. Martin, L'Urbanisme dans la Grèce Antique, 2nd ed., Paris, 1956, p.167. A study of the Arabic word al-Balat, which traces its etymology from the Greek plateia to Aramaic platia, has been made by E. Fränkel: Die Aramäische Fremdwörter in Arabisch, Leiden, 1886, p.281.
25. Robert, Études Anatoliennes, p.532, n.3.
26. J. Wilkinson, Egeria's Travels, rev. ed., Warminster, 1981, p.313.
27. Theodosius, De Situ vii; Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xix - xx; Adomnan, De Loc. Sanct. i.5.1-2; Bernard the Monk, Itin. xi; Arm. Lect. 42, 43, 44, 50.
28. Coüasnon, p.10.
29. C. H. Turner, "The Early Episcopal Lists: The Lists of Jerusalem", JTS 1, 1900, pp.529-553 at p.550. This view was also held by F. C. Burkitt, Christian Beginnings, London, 1924 (p.67).
30. Coüasnon, p.12.
31. C. M. Wilson, Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre, London, 1906, p.65; W. Harvey, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem, London, 1935, p.vi; V. Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, 3 Vols, Jerusalem, 1981-1982: I, p.221; A. Parrot, Golgotha et Saint-Sépulcre, Paris, 1955, p.37-38; J. Wilkinson, Jerusalem as Jesus Knew It, London, 1978, p.189-185, inter alios.
32. A. Heisenberg, Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche, Zwei Basiliken Konstantins, vol. I, Leipzig, 1908, p.41ff.
33. C. Katsimbini, "The Uncovering of the Eastern Side of the Hill of Calvary and its Base", LA 27, 1977, pp.197-208.
34. Bagatti and Testa, Golgota, p.37.
35. L. Kadman, The Coins of Aelia Capitolina, Jerusalem, 1956, p.36.
36. Wilson, Golgotha and the Holy Sepulchre, p.70-71.

37. See above, n.33.
38. F. Díez Fernandez, "La Recherche Archéologique (dans Saint-Sépulcre)", La Monde de la Bible 33, 1984, pp.28-36, at 34-36.
39. Bagatti and Testa, Golgota, pp.37-40; Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, I, p.92-101, II: Pls.40-45.
40. Díez, pp.34, 36.
41. Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, I, p.101.
42. Díez, p.34.
43. Ibid., Fig. 54; Katsimbini, Fig. 23.
44. Illustrations of the altar are reproduced in Díez, Fig. 55, and G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, "The Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem: History and Future", JRAS 1987, Pl. VI:2.
45. Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, I, p.101.
46. Díez, p.36.
47. Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, I, p.101.
48. Ibid.
49. V. Corbo, "A proposito di presunti scavi stratigrafici al S. Sepolcro", LA 34, 1984, pp.409-416 at pp.412-413.
50. Díez, p.36. Here, Díez states that there were three successive floors, but cf. his report in Katsimbini (p.207) where only one floor is mentioned.
51. J. Wilkinson, "The Tomb of Christ: An Outline of its Structural History", Levant 4, 1972, pp.83-97, at p.84, and see Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, p.246.
52. Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, II, Pl.XII and see their discussion of the topography of the area pp.97-104.
53. See Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, II, Pl.67 for the recorded spot heights of the rock under the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
54. I am grateful to Simon Gibson, who has converted all of Corbo's spot heights to sea level measures, and with whom I have discussed the topography of Golgotha in great detail.

55. For the model, see J. Lauffray, "La memoria Sancti Sepulchri du Musée de Narbonne et le temple rond de Baalbeck", Mélanges de l'Université St. Joseph, Beirut 38, 1962, pp.199-217; Wilkinson, "The Tomb of Christ", p.95, Fig. 15, cf. M. Guarducci, La cappella eburnea di Samagher, Padua, 1978, a replica which may date from 439.

56. De Loc. Sanct. i.2.6-8.

57. For a new translation of Daniel the Abbot, see J. Wilkinson, with J. Hill and W. F. Ryan, Jerusalem Pilgrimage 1099-1185, London, 1988, pp.120-172. Daniel wrote in Russian (c.1106-1107) and is not well known. For the text, Zhitie i knozhenie Danila rus'kyia zemli igumena, in the original language see: A. Venevitinov, Pravoslavniij Palestinskiij Sbornik 3 and 9 (1883/5).

58. Wilkinson, "The Tomb of Christ", p.84.

59. Bagatti and Testa, Golgota, p.37-38.

60. Bagatti, Gentiles, p.24.

61. Pace Corbo, Il Santo Sepolcro, I, p.97.

62. See above, n.18. The Constantinian floor in the area of the Anastasis and the courtyard was about 753 m. above sea level. Stones from the pavement have been discovered in various parts of the present church.

63. For the screen, see: Breviarius, 2.

64. Translation by Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.97.

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.134, and see: Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, pp.171-173, Bagatti, Gentiles, p.61; Testa, "Grotte dei Misteri", pp.106-112.

2. "Eleona" appears to have been the name of the Mount of Olives in the Jerusalem parlance of the day, which attached the Aramaic/Syriac emphatic ending "-a" to the Greek word ἐλαιών, "olive garden", see Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, II, p.382.

3. L. -H. Vincent, "L'Église de l'Eleona", RB 20, 1911, pp.219-265; idem, "L'Eleona, sanctuaire primitif de l'Ascension", RB 17, 1908, pp.122-125; Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, II, pp.337-360; E. Loukianoff, "Ὁ ἐλαιών", the Basilica of Eleon in Constantine's Time at the Mount of Olives, 326-330 A.D., Cairo, 1939; Crowfoot, pp.30-34; Ovadiah, Corpus, pp.82-83.

Ovadia, Corpus, pp.82-3; F. M. Abel, "Mont des Oliviers: Ruine de la grotte de l'Éléona", RE 27, 1918, pp.555-558.

4. In NTA II, p.232; James, p.254.

5. Pace John Wilkinson, "Christian Pilgrims in Jerusalem", PEQ, 1970, pp.75-101 at p.84 "the Acts of John is probably reflecting (in a Gnostic way) a tradition of Christian belief about the cave on the Mount of Olives, which at the time it was written was already accepted by the Jerusalem church. The Gnostic author thus takes this cave as the scene for his particular version of a story of teaching and ascension, because it is already associated with teaching and ascension in the orthodox Christian tradition."

6. NTA II, pp.795-6.

7. James, pp.218, 222.

8. *Ibid.*, p.563.

9. *Ibid.*, p.198.

10. ῥηρίν is used by the Church Fathers to mean "canonical" when referring to texts and "literal" when referring to meaning, cf. Eus. Dem. Evang. vii.1, so Lampe, p.1217. It seems that Eusebius is referring to the ascension as told in the Acts of the Apostles, which he goes on to quote, but the clause "at the cave that is shown there" and what follows is dependent on another tradition.

11. NTA I, p.246.

12. NTA I, pp.495-6 and cf. The Book of the Resurrection of Christ by Bartholomew the Apostle in James, pp.184-5.

13. NTA I, p.253.

14. NTA II, p.668; James, p.510.

15. NTA I, p.354.

16. See NTA, I, pp.191-227.

17. Translated by Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.92.

18. Wilkinson, Egeria, p.184.

19. Translated by Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.102-3.

20. It is attested by Jerome, in Zeph. i.15f (A.D. 392); Arm. Lect. 57 and by Peter the Iberian (see Petrus der

Iberer, ed. by R. Raabe, Leipzig, 1895, p.35).

21. See Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.192, 194.

22. See Canaan, p.79, 98, 293.

23. V. Corbo, "Scavo archeologico a ridosso della basilica dell'Ascensione", LA 10, 1959-60, pp.205-48, idem, Ricerche archeologiche al Monte degli Ulivi, Gerusalemme, Jerusalem, 1965, pp.93-162.

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. LA 14, 1963-4, pp.65-144.

2. The position of this cave as described by Daniel, "a bowshot to the south" outside the city wall (see Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrimage, p.122, 144), corresponds roughly to the position of the Milk Grotto. For contemporary traditions about the Milk Grotto, see: Canaan, p.60, 80, 98, 110.

3. Canaan, p.293.

4. Ibid., p.43.

5. Lane Fox, p.673.

6. Testa, Grotte, pp.65-144.

7. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.133.

8. The translation of $\sigma\pi\eta\lambda\alpha\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ as "den" in Cat. xviii.26 is given by W. Telfer, Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesis of Emesa, (The Library of Christian Classics: Vol IV), London, 1954; E. H. Gifford, Cyril of Jerusalem (A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, Vol VII), Oxford, 1894 and J. H. N. Newman, The Catechetical Lectures of S. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem (A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church), Oxford, 1838.

9. Translation by Chadwick, Origen: Contra Celsum, p.147. After this excellent rendering of Origen's Greek, Chadwick notes: "throughout the passage the play on the double meaning of ecclēsia, as the secular assembly and as the Church, cannot be reproduced in translation."

10. See S. Saller, Discoveries at St. John's, pp. 108-116.

11. H. Goussen, "Über georgische Drucke und Handschriften", in idem, Liturgie und Kunst, M. - Gladbach, 1923, p.30.

12. Canaan, p.80.
13. Comm. by C. Dauphin, IEJ 35, 1985, p.271.
14. Solomon's reputation as an arch-magician began in Judaism (Jos. Ant. viii.2.5, b.Gitt. 68a) but it was adapted by Christians, see: "Testament of Solomon" transl. and ed. by D. C. Duling in The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. J. H. Charlesworth, vol. 1, London, 1983, pp. 935-987. The motif of Solomon as the warrior spearing Lilith, found frequently on Jewish and Samaritan amulets, was taken over by Christians to use on their amulets. The motif was adapted so that Solomon became St. Sisinnius, and Lilith more often a snake: the same iconographical motif as that of the later St. George and the dragon. For a discussion of the development of this form of amulet iconography and the related motif of the "evil eye" see: Campbell Bonner, Studies in Magical Amulets: Chiefly Graeco-Roman, Michigan, 1950, pp.208-221; E. Goodenough, Vol. 2, New York, 1953, pp.227-235. Goodenough mentions that there exists a Christian carved ivory depicting "Solomon the Prophet", which shows "the direct potency of the figure of Solomon" (p.232). See too: Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked, Amulets and Magic Bowls, Jerusalem, 1985, pp.111-122.
15. For a discussion of the archaeological excavations see: Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, pp.669-742; J. Jeremias, The Rediscovery of Bethesda, Louisville, Kentucky, 1966. Testa, in "La Piscina Probatica, monumento pagano o giudaico?" TS 40, 1964, p.311-316 asks whether the site was part of Jewish-Christian tradition.
16. Vol. VII, p.81-2, of Ginzberg, The Legends of the Jews.
17. Ginzberg, I, p.83, III, p.137.
18. Ibid., I, p.156.
19. Ibid., III, pp.324-6, 445.
20. Ibid., IV, p.30.
21. Ibid., I, p.407.
22. Ibid., IV, p.68.
23. Ibid., II, p.160.
24. Goodenough, Vol. 4, pp.93-94, Vol. 6, p.179: during the ritual supernatural words were "revealed to us while we were in the cave".

25. Ibid., Vol. 1, p.4.
26. See E. S. Rosenthal, "The Giv'at ha-Mivtar Inscription", IEJ 23, 1973, pp.82-91.
27. B. Bagatti, "Una grotta bizantina sul Monte Tabor", LA 27, 1977, p.119-122.
28. J. Wilkinson, Jerusalem as Jesus knew it, p.110.
29. So Kopp, p.224ff, Wilkinson, Egeria, pp.196-200.
30. See S. Loffreda, Scavi di et-Tabgha, Jerusalem, 1970; A. M. Schneider, The Church of the Multiplying of the Loaves and Fishes, London, 1937.
31. Valerius (Ep. 396) says that Egeria called the mountain "Eremus".
32. Wilkinson, Egeria, p.200.
33. Called this since, according to Palestinian Muslim tradition, Job (Aiyûb) was healed after God told him to cover his body with earth from the cave and wash seven times in the spring (Hammâm Aiyûb). see: Bagatti, Antichi villaggi cristiani di Galilea, pp.89-91, D. Baldi, Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum, rev. ed., Jerusalem, 1955, p.354.
34. B. Bagatti, "La capella sul Monte delle Beatitudini", in RAC 14, 1937, pp.43-91.
35. V. Tzaferis, "The Archaeological Excavations at Shepherds' Field", LA 25, 1975, pp.5-52; C. Kopp, The Holy Places of the Gospels, Freiburg, 1963 (Eng. transl. of Die heiligen stätten der Evangelien, Regensburg, 1959), pp.36-42, cf. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, p.104a.
36. For the site in general see: V. Tzaferis and D. Urman, "Excavations at Kursi", Qadmoniot 6, 1973, pp.62-64; Tzaferis, Kursi-Gergesa (see Chapter Three, n.176).
37. Avi-Yonah, EAEHL, II, p.353-4.
38. Y. Ben Arie, "Caves and Ruins in the Beth Guvrin Area", IEJ 12, 1962. pp.47-61.
39. F. J. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister, Excavations in Palestine, London, 1902, p.259.
40. Ibid., p.257.
41. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani in Palestina", pp.117-131, at pp.121-22.

42. See Amos Kloner, "Underground Hiding Complexes from the Bar Kochba War in the Judaeen Shephalah", BA 46/4, 1983, pp.210-222; A. Kloner and Y. Teper, The Hiding Complexes in the Judaeen Shephalah, Tel Aviv, 1987 (Hebrew).
43. A. Kloner, "Horvat Midras", Qadmoniot 11, 1978, pp.115-119.
44. J. Wilkinson (Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.154) argues that Tel. Zakariya is not the site of ancient Caphar Zakariya, but it is at H. Bet Dikrim, 8 km. south-west of the tel., since the site of the tomb of Zechariah was said to be 2 miles from Kefar Turban (John Rufus, Assur. 90, understood by Wilkinson to be Kh. Attraba) and was visited by the Piacenza Pilgrim after Eleutheropolis on the way from Jerusalem to Ascalon. This latter point may be explained by the fact that the pilgrim says that from the main road from Jerusalem to Ascalon, they went off on a side road to Eleutheropolis. Perhaps they then returned to the main road, stopping off at the Saint Zechariah basilica on the way back. Eusebius located Azekah between Eleutheropolis and Jerusalem in Onom. 18.10, and presumably this is the same place as later Bethzachar, but there is room for doubt. Wilkinson has presented some serious objections to the site's identification (by J. Schwartz). As regards the argument presented here, since even H. Bet Dikrim lies in the general region, it is sufficient to prove that the vicinity was crossed through by pilgrims.
45. R. A. S. Macalister, "The Rock Cuttings of Tell Zakariya", PEFQSt, 1899, pp.25-36 at p.27.
46. Cf. Bliss and Macalister, Fig. 83, p.222.
47. No. 10 in Bliss and Macalister, Pl. 94.
48. See R. A. S. Macalister, "Further Notes on the Rock-Cuttings of Tell Zakariya", PEFQSt, 1900, pp.39-53 at p.48-50. Macalister read an iota before each of these words, but on the basis of his drawing of the graffiti, it would seem more likely that these are simply vertical scratchings of no import.
49. See F. Preisigke, Namenbuch, Heidelberg, 1922, col. 236; D. Foraboschi, Onomasticon Alterum Papyrologicum: Supplemento al Namenbuch di F. Preisigke, Milan, 1966, p.209; A. Negev, Inscriptions of Wadi Haggag, Sinai (Qedem 6), Jerusalem, 1977, p.15, 25-6; for the Nonnos Onesimus inscription at the Church of St. Stephen, Jerusalem, see: DACL 13, col.839; RE 1892, p.576; J. Murphy O'Connor, BAR 12, 1986, p.54-5.

50. Bliss and Macalister, pp.223-4.
51. Ibid., p.248ff. It is no. 34, cf. Plate 102.
52. Ibid., p.251, Pl. 101.
53. Ibid., p.252.
54. Ibid., p.238; Pl. 100; Warren and Conder, Survey of Western Palestine, p.267.
55. R. A. S. Macalister, "On a Rock Cut Chapel at Beit Leyi", PEFQSt, 1901, pp.226-229.
56. Warren and Conder, p.443.
57. Ben Arie, p.61, so too E. Oren, "The Caves of the Palestinian Shephelah", Archaeology 18, 1965, pp.218-224.
58. Excavations and Surveys in Israel 1983: Vol 2, English edition of Hadashot Arkheologiyot no. 82-83, Jerusalem 1983, p.12.
59. Bliss and Macalister, p.262.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. Canaan, p.13, 32-33
63. Literally, "full of men"
64. F. Williams in his otherwise excellent translation of Epiphanius' Greek, translates πολύανδρια δέ ἐστὶν οὕτως ἐν τῇ πατρίδι καλούμενα σπηλαία ἐν πέτραις ὀρυκτὰ κατεσκευασμένα as "In my country there are places of assembly of this kind, called "caverns", made by hewing them out of cliffsides", which is surely wrong.
65. S. Saller, "The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage", LA 11, 1960-61, pp.172-250; E. Testa, "The Graffiti of Tomb 21 at Bethphage", LA 11, 1960-61, pp.251-287: these two articles have been printed together in S. Saller and E. Testa, The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage, Jerusalem, 1961 in which Testa's discussion of the graffiti is at pp.84-120. The following references are given to this book only. See also: Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, pp.79-80.
66. See Saller, Bethphage, pp.70-74.
67. Ibid., p.70.
68. Ibid., p.78-83.

69. Ibid., p.74-78.
70. Ibid., p.73, echoing Vincent.
71. A. Kloner, "The Necropolis of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period", unpublished Ph.D. thesis for the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1980, pp.215-6 (Hebrew); idem, "A Burial Monument of the Second Temple Period west of the Old City of Jerusalem", Eretz Israel 18, 1985, pp.58-64 at pp.62-3, notes 24-7 (Hebrew).
72. Kloner, The Necropolis, p.214.
73. Curt Sachs, The Rise of Music in the Ancient World: East and West, London, 1944, pp.203-4.
74. Thee, Julius Africanus, pp.112, 114, 115, 118, 120, 123, 125, 138, 190.
75. Thee, p.112.
76. Testa thinks that it is an abbreviation sign, so that the N I ~ might be a shortened form of νίκη, "victory", though this would be semantically irrelevant given the employment of the palm branch. The small mark may also indicate a number.
77. Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, VIII, col.973-975.
78. PGM, p.276.
79. Goodenough, Vol. 7, 1958, pp.87-134, figs.103-136.
80. DACL, "Palme, Palmier", Vol. 13, cols 947-961.
81. Canaan, pp.12-13, 32-33.
82. PGM, pp.71, 107, 129, 150, 195, 253, 276, 311.
83. PGM, pp.128, 150, 276.
84. PGM, p.276.
85. I am not sure that the small diagonal line at the top is part of the letter or a coincidental scratch.
86. PGM, pp.107, 121, 143.
87. D. Diringer, The Aleph-Beth, London, 1958, pp.88-94, idem. The Alphabet, London, 1968, Vol 1, p.188-189; Vol. 2, Pl. 14.10-12; see also: J. Naveh, Early History of the Alphabet, Jerusalem/Leiden, 1982, pp.112-124 on the use of Paleo-Hebrew in the Second Temple period.

88. See Diringer, The Alphabet, Vol.2, pp.160-1.
89. M. Rosenthaler, "A Paleo-Hebrew Ossuary Inscription", IEJ 25, 1975, pp.138-139.
90. H. Odeberg, 3 Enoch or the Hebrew Book of Enoch, Cambridge, 1928; see 3 Enoch 2:2, 3:2 (and Odeberg's note to 3:2 on p.7); G. Scholem, Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition, New York, 1960, pp.43-55 (in a passage in Shiur Komah the heavenly tabernacle of the High Priest is called "tabernacle of the youth", Scholem, p.49 and see p.50). Interestingly, the epithet of "the youth" (which also means "servant") is found in Christian Gnostic literature and Mandaean sources as a reference to the Logos/Jesus, see Odeberg, pp.68-69, 191.

CHAPTER NINE

1. TS, 25 May, 1950, pp.148-9.
2. " ... la paleografia e la ceramica ritrovata ci manifestano il tempo bizantino", ibid., p.149.
3. P. Benoit and M. E. Boismard, "Un ancien sanctuaire chrétien à Bethanie", RB 58, 1951, pp.200-251.
4. Ibid., p.216-17.
5. "Espressioni bibliche nelle antiche iscrizioni cristiane della Palestina", LA 3, 1953, pp.111-148, at p.131, n.38.
6. Excavations at Bethany, Jerusalem, 1957, p.354.
7. Grotte dei Misteri, pp.128-131.
8. Ibid., p.130.
9. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, p.31.
10. See Dan Barag, "Glass Vessels from Jerusalem" (Part 1), Journal of Glass Studies 12, 1970, pp.35-63; "Glass Vessels from Jerusalem" (Parts 2 and 3), Journal of Glass Studies 13, 1971, pp.45-63.
11. Bible et Liturgie, Paris, 1951, p.196f; English edition, The Bible and the Liturgy, 1956, Notre Dame, p.143ff.
12. Testa, Grotte dei Misteri, p.124, 127.
13. R. Birger and E. Netzer, "The Churches of Herodion", Qadmoniot 20, 1987, pp.32-44 (Hebrew).

14. So Benoit and Boismard, p.230.
15. See Testa's reconstructed drawing in Grotte dei Misteri, p.129 and Mancini, p.30, and the careful record of existing remains in Benoit and Boismard, Pl. IV.
16. G. Barkay, "The 'Garden Tomb' in Jerusalem", pp.195-203 in Zev Vilnay's Jubilee Volume, edited by E. Schiller, Jerusalem, 1984 (Hebrew).
17. Simon Gibson, pers. com.
18. R.A.S. Macalister, "The Rock-Cut Tombs in Wady er-Rababi, Jerusalem", PEFQSt, 1900, pp.225-248.
19. W. J. Moulton, "A Painted Christian Tomb at Beit Jibrin", AASOR 2-3, 1921-22, pp.93-101, Pl. 1-4 and frontispiece. Moulton notes that other tombs in this area he has seen also have red drawings, p.101.
20. Y. Patrich, "Caves of Refuge and Jewish Inscriptions on the Cliffs of Nahal Michmas", EI 18, 1986, pp.153-166 (Hebrew); Y. Hirschfeld, "The Judaeian Monasteries in the Byzantine Period, Their Development and Internal Organisation in the Light of Archaeological Research", Thesis Submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, March 1987, p.114, illus. 80, 81.
21. A. Kloner, "Horvat Midras", pp.115-116.
22. V. Tzaferis, "Christian Symbols of the 4th Century and the Church Fathers", Thesis submitted to the Senate of the Hebrew University, 1971.
23. See Carl-Otto Nordström, "Der Leere Thron und die Symboltiere", in Ravennastudien, Uppsala, 1953, pp.46-54, Pls. 8,9, 11-13, Colour plate II. Nordström has collected all the known examples of the image in this article, so, to save space, references here will generally be to the plates of the items he has listed and not to the originals.
24. Ibid., Pl.12:f-j; 13:b, e.
25. Ibid., Pl.11:d; 12:b; 13:f.
26. Ibid., Pl.8; 12:d; 13:c.
27. Ibid., Pl.12:a?, c, e; 13:a, d.
28. Ibid., Pl.8; 9; 11:d; 12:a, b?, c; 13:a, b, c?, d. It is absent from the coin images only for lack of space.
29. Ibid., Pl. 8; 9; 11:d?; 12:a, b, c, d?, e; 13:a, c,

- d, e. This is also missing on the coins.
30. Ibid., Pl.8; 9; 11:d, c, e; 13:b, c.
31. Ibid., Pl.11:d; 12:b, c, d, e; 13: a, b, d.
32. Ibid., Pl. 12:d.
33. Ibid., Pl.12:g, h; 13:f.
34. Ibid., Pl. 12:f, j; 13:c.
35. Ibid., Pl.12:b, d, e; 13:d.
36. Ibid., Pl.12:a, c.
37. Ibid., Pl.13:e.
38. Ibid., Pl.8; 9; 12:b, d, e, f, g, h, i (over the backrest); 13:b, d, f.
39. "Dieser Begriffsinhalt von etimasia stimmt aber nicht ganz mit den Erkenntnissen der jüngeren Forschung überein. Der Thron ist nämlich oftmals gar nicht für den kommenden Christus bereitet, sondern Christus thront schon auf ihm, wenngleich in symbolischer Gestalt", *ibid.*, p.47.
40. See G. Bovini, Ravenna Mosaics, Oxford, 1978, Pl. 9.
41. Joseph Braun, Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung, Munich, 1924, Taf. 1, 6 and see for the various forms of Byzantine altars, DACL, "Autel", col. 3155-3189.
42. C. M. Dauphin and G. Edelstein, L'Eglise Byzantine de Nahariya (Israël), Etude Archéologique, Thessalonika, 1984, p.28, figs. 11-13, Pl. VIIla.
43. Y. Hirschfeld, "Khirbet el-Kuneitrah: a Byzantine Monastery in the Desert of Ziph", EI 18, 1985, pp.243-255, fig. 8 (Hebrew). In this case the base is 25 cm. high and 105 cm. broad, and is very like the heavy base of the drawing in the cave.
44. V. Corbo, Gli scavi di Kh. Siyar El-Ghanam (Campo dei Pastori) e i monasteri dei dintorni, Jerusalem, 1956, p.23, fot. 13, 18.
45. J. Patrich and L. di Segni, "New Greek Inscriptions from the Monastery of Theoctistus in the Judaeen Desert", EI 19, 1987, pp.272-281, at p.274 (Hebrew).
46. S. Gibson, "Ras et-Tawil: A Byzantine Monastery North of Jerusalem", BAIAS 1985-6, pp.69-73, at p.71.

47. A. M. Schneider, p.30-31. One can see the square sockets for the column bases around the sacred stone.
48. Foundations of an altar, M. Prausnitz, Excavations at Shavei Zion: The Early Christian Church, Rome, 1967, Pl. XI.
49. Hirschfeld, The Judaeen Monasteries, p.164, ill. 140.
50. Braun, Taf. 50.
51. Ibid., Taf. 7.
52. See E. H. Gombrich, The Story of Art, 11th ed., London, 1966, pp.97-98. Gombrich has a rare photograph of an image showing a Byzantine iconoclast white-washing an image of Christ, from the Chulder Psalter (ninth century) in the Moscow Historical Museum (p.98).
53. MS Trinity College, Dublin 60, see: C. Thomas, The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain, London, 1971, p.39.
54. See the painted cross in the Catacomb of Pontianus, Rome, Ill. 4 in K. Weitzmann, Studies in the Arts at Sinai, Princeton, N.J., 1982, p.99.
55. For pictorial examples of the long lampstands used in Palestine during the fifth century see: G. Foerster, "A Christian Painted Burial Cave near Kibbutz Lohamei-Ha-getta'ot", in Western Galilee Antiquities, ed. M. Yedaya, Tel Aviv, 1986, pp.416-431, at p.419 (Hebrew); and see too: DACL, "Cierges", col. 1613-1622.
56. Hirschfeld, Judaeen Monasteries, p.164, ill. 140.
57. M. Avi-Yonah, "Christian Archaeology in Israel, 1948-54", in Actes du 5e Congrès International d'Archéologie Chrétienne, Aix-en-Provence, 1954, Rome/Paris, 1957, pp.117-123, at p.122; idem, "Places of Worship in the Roman and Byzantine Periods", in Antiquity and Survival, 2 (2/3), 1957, pp.262-272, at p.260, Fig. 6, and p.270.
58. Benoit and Boismard, p.244
59. J. E. Taylor, "The Cave of Bethany", RB 94, 1987, pp.120-123.
60. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.151; Saller, Excavations at Bethany, p.364.
61. Baldi, Enchiridion, no. 579.

62. Saewulf, xxiii; Guide in the Gesta Francorum Expugnantium Iherusalem ii; De Situ Urbis Jerusalem 07; Work on Geography, clv; Seventh Guide cv; John of Würzburg vi.
63. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrimage, p.303.
64. Benoit and Boismard, p.204.
65. Testa, Grotte dei Misteri, p.123.
66. Ibid., p.125. Some explanation for this interpretation is given by J. Finegan, who writes: "The 'rock' is ... probably the very mass of rock in which is found the so-called Grotto of the Betrayal", The Archaeology of the New Testament, Princeton, N.J., 1969, p.105.
67. Item ad Hierusalem euntibus ad portem, quae est contra orientem, ut ascendatur in monte Oliveti, vallis, quae dicitur Iosafath, ad partem sinistram, ubi sunt vineae, est et petra ubi Iudas Scarioth Christum tradidit: CCSL 175, p.17.
68. See: B. Meistermann, Gethsémani. Notices historiques et descriptives, Paris, 1920; G. Orfali, Gethsémani: Notice sur l'Eglise de l'Agonie ou de la Prière, d'après les fouilles récentes accomplies par la Custodie Franciscaine de Terre Sainte (1909 et 1920), Paris, 1924; Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, pp.301-337; 1926 (corrections), pp.1007-1013; Kopp, 1963, p.345; Ovadiah, p.84-5; see also: B. Bagatti, "Tempera dell'antica basilica di Getsemani", in RAC 15, 1938, pp.153-162.
69. Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, p.306, n.1.
70. Cf. Hunt, p.158; Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.157.
71. Struxit etiam Theodosius rex Hierosolymis ecclesiam Jesmaniah in qua sepulcrum erat sanctae Mariae, quam diruerunt Persae quo tempore Hierosolyma usque profecti ecclesias Hierosolymitanas destruxerunt ... (PG 111, 1028).
72. Gethsemani, locus ubi ubi salvator ante passionem oravit. est autem ad radices montis oliveti nunc ecclesia desuper aedificata.
73. Lewis and Short, p.561; in earlier times it carried a sense of motion: "from above, from overhead".
74. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.157-8.
75. Breviarius vii, Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin.xvii;

Commemoratorium x; and see the English translations of Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrimage: the First Guide iii (p.88); Ottobonian Guide iv (p.92); Saewulf, xvii (p.106); the Guide Perhaps by a German Author i (p.117); Daniel the Abbot, Zhitie xx (p.133-4); Guide in Gesta Francorum Expugnantium xiv (p.175); De Situ Urbis Jerusalem 07 (p.179); Muhammad al-Idrisi, xxxiii (p.225); Belard of Ascoli, i (p.228-9); Seventh Guide civ (p.235); Second Guide cxxiv (p.240f); Theoderic, xxiii-xxiv, p.298-300; John Phocas, xv.1-8 (p.325-6). Only John of Würzburg, cxxxvii-cxxxviii (p.255f) is vague.

76. Wilkinson is probably right that Adomnan misunderstood Arculf when he reports that the rock where Jesus prayed was in the church of St. Mary, see: Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.99, 157.

77. GCS, Origenes Werke XI p.204 (89).

78. Corbo, Ricerche archeologiche al Monte degli Ulivi, pp.1-57; Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, p.335, Fig. 147.

79. See for olive presses in general: G. Dalman, Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina, Vol. IV, Gütersloh, 1935, pp.153-290; B. Frankel, "Critical Remarks on the Production of Olive Oil in Judaea", Teva Va-Aretz 23, 1981, p.183 (Hebrew); R. Frankel, "The History of the Processing of Wine and Oil in Galilee in the Period of the Bible, the Mishnah and the Talmud", unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Tel Aviv University, 1981 (Hebrew); M. Heltzer and D. Eitam (eds), Olive Oil in Antiquity (Papers of the conference held in Haifa, 1987), Haifa, 1987; A. Kloner and Y. Hirschfeld, "Khirbet el-Qasr: A Byzantine Fort with an Olive Press in the Judaeian Desert", EI 19, 1987, pp.132-141 (Hebrew: English version to be published in BAIAS, Oct., 1989); Y. Peleg, "Ancient Oil Presses and the Way they Function", Teva Va-Aretz 22, 1980, pp.189-190 (Hebrew); A. Shatel, "The Production of Olive Oil in Judaea", Teva Va-Aretz 23, 1980, pp.80-81 (Hebrew); Z. Yeivin, "Two Ancient Oil Presses", Atiqot 3, 1966, pp.52-63 (Hebrew).

80. Dalman, p.322.

81. Y. Teper, "The Oil-Presses at the Maresha Region", in Heltzer and Eitam (eds), Olive Oil, pp.25-46 (Hebrew); A. Kloner and N. Sagin, "The Technology of Oil Production in the Hellenistic Period: Studies on the Crushing Process at Maresha", in Heltzer and Eitam (eds), Olive Oil, pp.133-138.

82. See M. Gichon, "The Upright Screw-operated Pillar Press in Israel", Scripta Classica Israelica 5, 1980, pp.209-220.

83. See Dalman, p.322.

84. Ibid., p.322.

CHAPTER TEN

1. Theodosius is first to call the Byzantine basilica Sancta Sion, cf. Eutychius of Alexandria, CSCO 193, p.142, Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. xxii, Epiphanius, Hag. ii-iii; and see Wilkinson, Jerusalem, p.165. The name "holy Zion" is confirmed by the graffiti found in³ Byzantine tomb in the Valley of Hinnom (Wādi er-Rababi), see: Macalister, "The Rock-Cut Tombs in Wādy er-Rababi, Jerusalem", PEFQSt, 1901, pp.225-248, which apparently belonged to "Holy Zion": see Pls. I, III: MNHMA THC AΓIAC CICON).

2. The late fourth century Didascalia Addai, appears to identify the upper room of the Last Supper with the upper room of Pentecost, but does not mention Mount Zion; see Vincent and Abel,^{Jerusalem} p. 453 and The Teaching of Addai, transl. by G. Howard (Early Christian Literature 4, SBL Texts and Translations 16), Chico, Ca., 1981.

3. PG 93, 1205, 1217, 1323, 1480. See also: Sophronius, Anacreon. 55-62; Hippolytus of Thebes, i.5; Arm. Lect. 39.

4. Though see: E. Testa, "Le Cène del Signore", TS 1965, pp.116-121.

5. M. Broshi, "Excavations on Mount Zion, 1971-1972 (Preliminary Report)", IEJ 26, 1976, pp.81-88.

6. "An Essene Quarter on Mount Zion?", in Studia Hierosolymitana in onore di P. Bellarmino Bagatti, Jerusalem, 1986, pp.245-287; idem, "Das Essenerquarter in Jerusalem und dessen Einfluss auf die Urkirche", Das Heilige Land 113, 1981, pp.3-14.

7. εἰς δεῦρο πεφυλαγμένον οἱ τῇδε κατὰ διάδοχον περιέποντες ἀδελφοί (GCS: Eusebius Werke, Vol. 2/2, p.674). By the time of Egeria, the throne definitely was housed in the basilica of Holy Zion (cf. Pet. Diac., Lib. E).

8. B. Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.117-118; cf. J. Briand, Sion, Jerusalem, 1973, pp.35-62.

9. "Ancora sulla data di Eteria", Bibbia e Oriente 10, 1968, pp.73-75; "Ritrovamento archeologico sul Sion", LA 31, 1981, pp.249-256, at p.249.

10. Le Grand Lectionnaire de l'Église de Jérusalem,

- transl. M. Tarschnichvili, CSCO 189, Louvain, 1959, p.80, no. 565.
11. Hunt, p.217-218.
12. Translated in Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.202-203, from the text published by M. Guidi, Rendiconti della R. Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche, e filologiche 16.5, Rome, 1908, pp.46-53.
13. J. Pinkerfeld, In the Paths of Jewish Art, Tel Aviv, 1957, pp.128-130 (Hebrew); idem, "David's Tomb: Notes on the History of the Building, Preliminary Report", Bulletin III of the Louis Rabinowitz Fund for the Exploration of Ancient Synagogues, Jerusalem 1960, pp.41-43. See also, Finegan, pp.147-154.
14. J. W. Hirshberg, "The Remains of an Ancient Synagogue on Mount Zion", in Jerusalem Revealed, pp.116-117; idem, "The Remains of Ancient Synagogues in Jerusalem", Qadmoniot 1, 1968, pp.56-62, at pp.56-9 (Hebrew).
15. See E. Pierotti, Jerusalem Explored, London/Cambridge, 1864, Vol. 1, pp.210-218, especially p214f.
16. Murphy-O'Connor, p.94.
17. Wilkinson, Jerusalem, pp.168-170; cf. idem, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.171.
18. Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, pp.421-481, especially pp.431-440, fig. 168, cf. Dalman, pp.316-318.
19. Bagatti, Circumcision, Fig. 25. Testa's reading of the pieces owes much to imagination. The only clear word is ἀβροκάρπος.
20. See Wilkinson, Jerusalem, Fig.115.
21. H. Renard, "Die Marienkirchen auf dem Berge Sion in ihrem Zusammenhang mit dem Abendmahlssaale", Das Heilige Land 44, 1900, pp.3-23 at pp.18-19, see Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, Fig. 168, and pp.431-440.
22. E. Eisenberg, "Jerusalem: Church of the Dormition", in Excavations and Surveys in Israel, Eng. transl. of Hadashot Arkheologiyot, 84-5, 1984, p.47.
23. M. Gisler, "Sancta Sion und Dormitio Dominae. Ihre Verbundenheit im Grundplan", Das Heilige Land 79, 1935, pp.6-9.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

1. His subsequent publications about the site include: B. Bagatti, "Nuove scoperte alla tomba della Virgine a Getsemani", LA 22, 1972, pp.236-290; "Scoperte archeologiche alla Tomba di Maria a Getsemani", Marianum 34, 1972, pp.193-199; "L'apertura della tomba della Vergine a Getsemani", LA 23, 1973, pp.318-321; "Tombeau de la Vierge", RB 80, 1973, pp.581-582; B. Bagatti, M. Piccirillo, A. Prodomo, New Discoveries at the Tomb of the Virgin Mary in Gethsemane, Jerusalem, 1975.
2. Bagatti, "Le origini della tomba della Virgine al Getsemani", Rivista Biblica 11, 1963, pp.38-52; idem, "S. Pietro nella 'Dormitio Mariae'", Bibbia e Oriente 13, 1971, pp.42-48; cf. E. Hammerschmidt, "Die Marienkirche in Gethsemane und das äthiopische Ta'amra Maryam", in Theokratia: Jahrbuch des Institutum Judaicum Delitzschianum (2, 1970-72), Leiden, 1973, pp.3-6.
3. "Nuove Scoperte", pp.19-23, 57.
4. Ibid., p.48-9.
5. For a sample of the many texts, commentaries and translations see: V. Arras (ed.), De Transitu Mariae Apocrypha Aethiopice, CSCO 342-343, Louvain, 1973 and "Adnotationes" in Librum Requiæ, CSCO 352, Louvain, 1974, pp.75-105; M. Heibach-Reinsisch, Ein neu "Transitus Mariae" des Pseudo-Melito, Rome, 1962; James, pp.194-227; C. Tischendorf, Apocalypses Apocryphae, Leipzig, 1866, pp.112-36; A. Wenger, L'Assomption de la T. S. Vierge dans la tradition byzantine du VII au Xe siècle, Paris, 1955.
6. Bagatti, "Nuove scoperte", p.237; Bagatti, Piccirillo and Prodomo, p.10.
7. Bagatti, Piccirillo and Prodomo, p.14.
8. Bagatti, "S. Pietro nella 'Dormitio Mariae'", pp.42-48; idem, "Ricerche sulle tradizioni della Morte della Virgine", Bibbia e Oriente 13, 1971, pp.185-21; idem, "Le due redazione del 'Transitua Mariae'", Marianum 32, 1970, pp.279-287.
9. Arras (ed.), CSCO 342-343, pp.72-105.
10. Wenger, pp.209-241.
11. Bagatti, Piccirillo and Prodomo, p.15; Bagatti, "Nuove Scoperte", p.240.
12. Bagatti, "Nuove scoperte", p.238.

13. See James, pp.198, 199, 215, 217.
14. Ibid, p.208.
15. S. Saller "The Tombstone Inscription in the Church of Mary's Tomb at Gethsemani", in Corbo, Ricerche Archeologiche, pp.76-80.
16. See C. N. Johns, "The Abbey of St. Mary in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, Jerusalem", QDAP 8, 1939, pp.117-136, Pl.57-60 at p.129ff.
17. See Bagatti, New Discoveries, pp.49-57; Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem, pp.805-831; Pl.81. See also, B. A. Meistermann, Le Tombeau de la Sainte Vierge à Jérusalem, Jerusalem, 1903, Fig. 5. It should be noted that Vincent's plan of an octagonal upper church is purely hypothetical.

CHAPTER TWELVE

1. B. Bagatti, Scavi di Nazaret, Jerusalem, 1967; for ease of reference the English edition Excavations in Nazareth, Jerusalem, 1969 will be used here.
2. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.9.
3. Ibid., p.10.
4. Ibid., p.11.
5. Oscar Cullman, in NTA I, p.372.
6. Bagatti, p.12. Bagatti (ibid., p.11, n.6) mistakenly reports that a Latin translation from Hebrew was seen in the sixteenth century; in fact this was from Arabic (James, p.84).
7. Quoted by Bagatti, p.12.
8. Ibid..
9. James, p.84.
10. So too Testa, Simbolismo, p.576.
11. Circumcision, pp.209-212.
12. Very possibly this is a reference to Jesus' brothers James and Joseph.
13. Cf. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.10.

14. Ibid., p.15. See also: idem, "I parenti del Signore a Nazaret", Bibbia e Oriente 8, 1966, pp.259-263.
15. C. F. Crusé, An Ecclesiastical History (to the year 324 of the Christian Era etc) by Eusebius, London, 1838, p.20; A. C. McGiffert, The Church History of Eusebius, Oxford, 1890, p.93; H. J. Lawlor and J. E. L. Oulton, Eusebius: the Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine, London, 1927, Vol. 1, p.21; G. Bardy, Eusèbe de Césarée: Histoire Ecclésiastique, Paris, 1952, p.28; K. Lake, Eusebius: Ecclesiastical History, Cambridge, Mass./London, 1949, Vol. 1, p.63; G. A. Williamson, Eusebius: the History of the Church from Christ to Constantine, Harmondsworth, 1965, p.55.
16. Lampe, p.339.
17. Crusé, p.21; McGiffert, p.93; Liddell and Scott, p.381.
18. Williamson, p.55.
19. A. Meyer and W. Bauer, "The Relatives of Jesus", NTA 1, pp.413-432 at p.424.
20. Bardy, p.28.
21. Liddell and Scott, p.381.
22. Liddell and Scott's sense II.
23. E. A. Sophocles, Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (From B.C. 146 to A.D. 1100), Boston, 1870, p.352.
24. A sixth-century copy exists in the British Museum: BM 14639. The fifth-century Armenian version is a translation from the Syriac (McGiffert, p.53). Rufinus' Latin translation was made shortly after.
25. See W. Wright and N. McLean, with A. Merx, The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius in Syriac, Cambridge, 1988, p.36.
26. See Payne-Smith, Thesaurus Syriacus, Oxford, 1891, col. 2209-2210; S. Brock, pers. comm.
27. Syr. ܐܡܝܬܝܬܐ cf. ܐܡܝܬܐ "arrogance", root: ܐܡܝܬ "shine". In Eshtaphal "to glorify oneself, to boast". The sense is derogatory, as in the Greek. Rufinus has: in primis gloriabantur.
28. "The aforementioned" are τοῦ σωτῆρος οἱ κατὰ σάρκα συγγενεῖς "the relatives of the Saviour according to the

flesh (Hist. Eccles. i.7.11)

29. Γένος is a word of numerous meanings. In order to avoid an emphasis on Jesus here, I have used "line"; it is the γένος that is of key interest to the relatives of Jesus, not their relationship to him per se.

30. Cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. v.1.3.

31. Manuscripts 0, f¹³; 1547m; it. a, (b), c, d, g, (k), 9). This reading is also attested by Ambrosiaster (fourth century) and in the Syriac Sinaitic version (third century).

32. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.15.

33. John Chrysostom, commenting on John's Gospel, notes that the "lords" were admired everywhere for a long time, but that their names were not known: a simple deduction from what is preserved in Eusebius' text (Hom. in Joh. xxi.3, PG 59, 132).

34. A. Neubauer, La Géographie du Talmud, Paris, 1868, p.269. For Bagatti's identification of Africanus' Kochaba with a Galilean town, see: B. Bagatti, "Kaukab. In questo paese vissero i parenti del Signore", TS 1957, pp.121-125.

35. See: Palästinajahrbuch 18-19, 1923, p.43ff.

36. GRP, p.50; cf. Schumacher, Across the Jordan, London, 1886, p.83; Bagatti, "Ricerche su alcuni siti Giudeo-Cristiani", pp.300-304.

37. See: O. F. Meinardus, "The Site of Apostle Paul's Conversion at Kaukab", BA 44, 1980, pp.57-59.

38. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.19.

39. Cf. Testa, Simbolismo, pp.182-8.

40. Encyclopaedia Judaica II, col.884.

41. Bagatti, p.18.

42. M. Avi-Yonah, "A List of Priestly Courses from Caesarea", IEJ 12, 1962, pp.137-139 at p.139.

43. See C.S. Klein, Beiträge zur Geographie und Geschichte Galilaeas, Leipzig, 1909, p.5.

44. So Kopp, Holy Places, p.59.

45. Quoted from John Wilkinson's translation, Egeria, p.193.

46. *Tíri* here surely has the sense of "each", see Liddell and Scott, p.1796:2.
47. Hunt, pp.135-147.
48. Transl. by J. Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.79-80.
49. So Kopp, p.55.
50. Hunt, p.137.
51. Eutychius, Annales xxii, PG 111, 1083.
52. Ibid., 245; PG 111, 1090.
53. Kopp, p.56.
54. See Wilkinson, Egeria, p.193.
55. In order to maintain consistency, the numeration of my figures is based on Bagatti's.
56. B. Vlaminck, A Report of the Recent Excavations and Explorations conducted at the Sanctuary of Nazareth, Washington, 1900. This report is only five pages long and contains three plans.
57. P. Viaud, Nazareth et ses deux Églises de l'Annonciation et de Saint-Joseph d'après les fouilles récentes, Paris, 1910.
58. See Bagatti, p.2.
59. Ibid., p.27, 32, 35, 37, 245.
60. Ibid., p.27, 29.
61. Ibid., p.52-56.
62. Ibid., p.58-59.
63. See Jean-Barnard Livio, "Nazareth: Les fouilles chez les Religieuses de Nazareth", La Monde de la Bible 16, 1967, pp.26-34..
64. C. Kopp, "Beiträge zur Geschichte Nazareths", JPOS 18, 1938, pp.191-228.
65. Comm. by N. Feig, IEJ 33, 1983, pp.116-7.
66. Comm. by N. Feig, IEJ 38, 1988, p.76-8.
67. Livio, p.30.

68. Frey, CIJ II, no. 988, p.173.
69. Bagatti, p.246
70. Kopp's no.15: Kopp, "Beiträge", p.202.
71. Bagatti, Fig. 197 and 198, p.245.
72. Cf. the inscription of Euphemia found in the Tomb of the Virgin, dated to the fifth century, in Corbo, Ricerche Archeologiche al Monte degli Ulivi, p.78, Fig. 65.
73. C. H. Kraeling, Gerasa, City of the Decapolis, New Haven, 1938, pp.357-366.
74. Bagatti, pp.51, 53-56, 176.
75. Ibid., pp.80-97.
76. Viaud, pp.89-92, Fig.44. Lest anyone be initially perplexed that the picture published by Viaud is significantly different to the mosaic seen today, it should be noted that Viaud's photograph was not of the actual mosaic: "Nous en donnons ici une photographie d'après des estampages pris un peu à la hâte, mais, croyons-nous, suffisamment exacts." (p.90); cf. Bagatti, p.95 (Fig.51), Pl.VI, E. Testa, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, Jerusalem, 1969. p.126. Viaud's Fig. 46 of the mosaic in cave no.29 is also an approximation.
77. See for an illustration: Briand, Nazareth, pp.41-2.
78. Bagatti (p.99) sees in the latter a delta and a chi, which he relates to Jewish-Christians by means of Pythagoreanism and Gnosticism, cf. Testa, Simbolismo, p.83; idem, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, pp.125-9.
79. Bagatti, p.100.
80. Ibid., p.99.
81. Ibid., p.100.
82. Bagatti has 9 per 10 cm. but my own average measurements clearly indicate larger tesserae.
83. For a "Jewish-Christian" interpretation of the mosaic, see Testa, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, pp.129-132.
84. Ϡ is an abbreviation for πρὸς "from" (E.M. Thompson, Introduction to Greek and Latin Palaeography, Oxford, 1912, p.81). I am therefore not sure that Bagatti's translation of "gift", προφορά, is the correct

one.

85. M. W. Prausnitz, M. Avi-Yonah, D. Barag, Excavations at Shavei Zion, Rome, 1967, Pl. XXXa, p.47.

86. Viaud, p.88, Bagatti, p.32.

87. Personal observation.

88. See Avi-Yonah, "Christian Archaeology in Israel", pp.118-119; V. Tzaferis, "The Greek Inscriptions from the Early Christian Church at 'Evron", EI 19, 1987, pp.36-53; A. Jacques, "A Palestinian-Syriac Inscription in the Mosaic Pavement at 'Evron", EI 19, 1987, pp.54-56.

89. See Ovadiah, p.162.

90. Prausnitz, Avi-Yonah and Barag, pp.49-55.

91. Avi-Yonah, "Christian Archaeology", p.122.

92. Y. Aharoni, "A Village of Monks in the Region of Beth ha-Shitta", Bulletin of the Israel Exploration Society 1954, pp.209-215 (Hebrew). Bagatti thinks the pavement is the work of Jewish-Christians, see Circumcision, pp.281-285.

93. M. Avi-Yonah, "Mosaic Pavements in Palestine, QDAP 3, 1934, pp.26-73, at p.50.

94. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.99, n.8.

95. Cf. R. D. Kaplan, "Looking at Some Recent Excavations", in Christian News from Israel 27/1, 1979, pp.18-22 at pp.20, 22.

96. Bagatti, p.103.

97. Tzaferis, "Kursi-Gergesa", pp.24, 27.

98. Kraeling, Gerasa, Pl. 83a,b.

99. Ibid., Pl. 69b. Both these instances are noted by Bagatti, p.107, n.15.

100. Bagatti, p.99, n.8.

101. Ibid., pp.174-176.

102. Vlaminck, p.3.

103. Ibid., p.6.

104. See also Kopp, Holy Places, p.63.

105. Ibid., p.54; Bagatti, p.16.
106. Archimandrite Hyppolitos, Nea Sion 15 (1923), p.56; Papadopoulos-Kerameus 5:386 - same text; P. Hanozin, Le Geste des Martyrs, Paris, 1935, pp.134-138; Analecta Bollandiana xviii, p. 180; G. Garitte, Le Calendrier palestinien-georgien du Sinaiticus 34, (Subs. Hag. 30) Brussels, 1958, p.173; PO 21, pp.112-3. See also: Y. E. Meimaris, Sacred Names, Saints, Martyrs and Church Officials in the Greek Inscriptions and Papyri pertaining to the Christian Church of Palestine (Μεληματα 2), Athens, 1986, p.173.
107. Bagatti, p.198-9. It should be remembered of course that the name Κόνων was quite common and is found in other Palestinian inscriptions; see Meimaris, p.173: nos 875.I, II; p.231: no.1144.
108. Ibid., pp.84-5, 115.
109. Ibid., Figs. 8:8h, 69, p.116-7.
110. Cf. ibid., p.181.
111. V. Corbo, "La chiesa-sinagoga dell'Annunziata a Nazaret", LA 37, 1987, pp.333-348 at p.335 and Fig. 1.
112. Cf. Testa, Simbolismo, pp.78-94 cf. Bagatti, pp.122-3.
113. Bagatti, pp.228-232.
114. Ibid., Fig.70:b and c.
115. Ibid., Pl. VII and VIII, see p.112 for a description.
116. Ibid., p.120, n.36.
117. E. Mazar, Beth Shearim, Report on the Excavations During 1936-1940, Vol.1: Catacombs, Jerusalem, 1973, Pl. XX.2; XXIII.1,2; in Jason's Tomb, Jerusalem: L. Y. Rahmani, "Jason's Tomb", IEJ 17, 1967, pp.61-100, at pp.70-71, Figs. 5a and 5b; the (original) "Jerusalem Ship" in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre: C. Bennett and S. C. Humphreys, "The Jerusalem Ship", The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology and Underwater Exploration 3/2, 1974, pp.307-10, Fig.2.
118. Bagatti, p.231.
119. Ibid., p.232.
120. Bagatti, pp.228-231, Viaud, pp.142-144.

121. E. Testa, "Le Grotte Mistiche"; idem, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, pp.42-44.
122. R. Reich, pers. comm.
123. Frankel, p.200, ill.6.1 and 9.6.2.
124. Bagatti, p.116.
125. Ibid., p.229.
126. Letter of July, 1986.
127. Bagatti, pp.53-5, Figs.20, 21.
128. Ibid., p.176.
129. Ibid., Fig. 137, g,h, p.175; p.182.
130. Ibid., Fig. 137:p; Vlainckx (p.4) thought this was created by the Crusaders, cf. Bagatti, p.185.
131. Bagatti, Fig. 50.
132. Ibid., p.120.
133. Ibid., Fig. 79, no.28; Pl.V.2, p.134.
134. J. W. Hayes, Late Roman Pottery, London, 1972, p.235: Fig. 40, Style A, no.24.
135. Ibid., p.239.
136. Loffreda, Cafarnao II: La Ceramica, Foto 18, p.81, nos. 11,15.
137. Bagatti, Fig. 79, nos.21-29.
138. Ibid., pp.127-129.
139. Ibid., Fig. 76, no.26; Fig. 77, no.7.
140. Ibid., no.33, p.127 and Pl. III.3.
141. Preisigke, col.386.
143. Foraboschi, p.294.
144. Meimaris, p.171, Inscription no.867.
145. Preisigke, col.27; Foraboschi, p.31.
146. Bagatti, p.131.
147. Ibid., Fig. 79, nos. 1-16, p.132-4.

148. Ibid., Fig. 81.
149. Ibid., no. 17, p.138.
150. Ibid., nos.18-20.
151. Ibid., p.131.
152. W. Worth, Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum, Longmans, 1908, p.xiii, p.35: no.13.
153. Bagatti, p.139.
154. Ibid., p.140, Fig. 84, p.141.
155. Corbo, "Chiesa-Sinagoga", pp.344-348.
156. Bagatti, p.145.
157. Ibid., Fig. 84.4c, Fig. 87.
158. Ibid., Fig. 84.4b cf. Fig. 108.1.
159. Corbo, Figs 1 and 2.
160. Ibid., pp.338-9.
161. Bagatti, p.177.
162. Ibid., p.174.
163. Ibid., p.185.
164. Vlaminck, pp.3-5.
165. Viaud, pp.85-95.
166. Bagatti, p.218.
167. Ibid., p.185.
168. Ibid., p.210.
169. Kopp (Holy Places, pp.64-65) suggested that it was a tomb of Mary which was replaced by that in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
170. Corbo, "Chiesa-Sinagoga", p.340.
171. See above, and Bagatti, Figs 84:21; 95.
172. Ibid., p.140, cf. p.145-6, cf. H. Kohl and C. Watzinger, Die antike Synagogen in Galiläa, Leipzig,

- 1919, Abb. 244-6, 249.
173. Kraeling, p.239.
174. Bagatti, p.169.
175. Ibid., pp.170-1; E. Testa, "Il Targum di Isaia 55,1.13, scoperto a Nazaret e la teologia sui pozzo dell'Acqua Viva", LA 17, 1967, pp.259-289; idem, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, pp.79-86.
176. Bagatti, p.140. cf. p.146.
177. K. Hintlian, History of the Armenians in the Holy Land, Jerusalem, 1976, p.1, 38.
178. See M. E. Stone, "Holy Land Pilgrimage of Armenians before the Arab Conquest", RE 93, 1986, p.93-110.
179. Hintlian, p.14. Comm. by Prof. C. Dowsett.
180. Vincent and Abel, Jérusalem II, p.391; Hintlian, p.14.
181. B. N. Arakelian, "Armenian Mosaic of the Early Middle Ages", Atti del Primo Simposio internazionale di Arta armena, Venice, 1978, pp.1-9; H. Evans, "Nonclassical Sources for the Armenian Mosaic near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem", N. G. Garsoian, T. F. Matthews, R. W. Thomson (eds), East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period, Dumbarton Oaks, 1982, pp.217-222; B. Narkiss, "The Armenian Treasures of Jerusalem: Mosaic Pavements", in B. Narkiss (ed.) Armenian Art Treasures of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 1979, pp.21-28.
182. A.K. Sanjian, "The Armenian Communities of Jerusalem", in Narkiss (ed.), Armenian Art, pp.11-20.
183. See Negev, Wadi Haggag, p.77; M. E. Stone, The Armenian Inscriptions from the Sinai, Cambridge, Mass., 1982.
184. C. Burney and D. Marshall, The Peoples of the Hills, London, 1971, p.224.
185. Sanjian, p.11.
186. See for a doubtful reconstruction of the rest of the graffito: Bagatti, p.151; Briand, p.23; Testa, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana, p.70.
187. Bagatti, p.152, 155.
188. Briand, p.26. In Bagatti's original Italian text,

this graffito was misprinted as KE MAPIA, cf. Bagatti, p.156.

189. Briand, p.26.

190. Testa, pp.75-76.

191. Bagatti, p.158.

192. Cerinthus: Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. i.26.1; Ps-Tertullian, Adv. omn. haer. 3; Epiphanius, Pan. xxviii.1.2; xxx.14.2; Ebionites: Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. v.1.3; iii.21.1; Hippolytus, Ref. vii.34; Eusebius, Hist. Eccles. iii.27.3; Epiphanius, Pan. xxx.2.2; Jerome, De vir. ill. ix; Nazoraeans: Jerome, In Esa. ii.2).

193. Klijn and Reinink, p.26. As we saw above, Jesus' descent from Joseph appears to have been quite the usual belief of Christians of the first century.

194. Bagatti, pp.191-199.

195. Preisigke, col.246, Foraboschi, p.217.

196. Thompson, p.81.

197. Bagatti, pp.196-199; Testa, pp.64-70.

198. Bagatti, Fig. 156a, pp.199-200.

199. Ibid., pp.201-204.

200. Ibid., pp.205, 209.

201. Ibid., p.215.

202. It is used for the cover illustration of the paperback edition of Testa's, Nazaret Giudeo-Cristiana.

203. No.28. Bagatti, p.164; idem, "Probabile Figura del Precursore in un Graffito di Nazaret", Oriens Antiquus 3, 1964, pp.61-66.

204. J. E. Taylor, "A Graffito depicting John the Baptist in Nazareth?" PEQ 1987, pp.142-148.

205. Cf. Bagatti, Nazareth, p.158, 162.

206 'Avavías is a name found in the papyri from the second to the eighth centuries: Preisigke, col. 29; Foraboschi, p.32. The other names are not found in the papyri, apart from Πούθ, found in the eighth century: Preisigke, col. 354. Λέωνος is itself not found, though Λέων and Λεωνίδης are common: Preisigke, col.195; Foraboschi, p.179.

207. Bagatti, pp.23-25.
208. Viaud, pp.142-144.
209. Bagatti, pp.219-233.
210. Kopp, pp.82-86.
211. Livio, "Nazareth": He notes that Byzantine remains were discovered on the property, including granite columns, carved stones, marble columns and fragments, mosaic tesserae and Byzantine money as well as underground Byzantine (?) arches. Pottery fragments in the rock-cut cistern have been dated to the fifth to ninth centuries. According to Livio, who has interpreted the unpublished material collected by Father Henry Senès, the property is situated on what was a little river which flowed down from the Nebi Sain. Livio also identifies two holes in the rock which, he says, was where the ropes of the winch mentioned by Arculf were affixed. One might add that the marble fragments from this church give a strong clue as to where the marble capitals thought by Bagatti to come from the "Jewish-Christian synagogue-church" really belong.
212. Pace Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, p.165.
213. Bagatti, pp.233-234.
214. Dalman, p.68.
215. Ibid.
216. The word used lucidissima is understood by Bagatti and Testa to have a specifically Jewish-Christian meaning: Bagatti, p.23; Testa, "Grotte dei Misteri", pp.74-76.
217. Wilkinson, p.25, n.73, cf. Piacenza Pilgrim, Itin. viii: the Samaritans burned away the footprints of Christian pilgrims with straw; detested Christians touching anything they did not buy, for it rendered the object unclean; considered them to be contaminated so that even money from Christians had to be dipped in water before they would touch it; cursed Christians when they arrived, and generally created an unwelcoming atmosphere that would have put pilgrims off.
218. Taylor, "Graffito", p.147. There was a significant earthquake on August 22, 502 and another on July 9, 551. The latter caused a great deal of destruction in Palestine, see K. W. Russell, "The Earthquake Chronology of Palestine and Northwest Arabia from the 2nd through the mid-8th Century A.D.", BASOR 260, 1985, pp.37-59 at

pp.43-46. There were no significant earthquakes in the mid to late fifth century that would account for the destruction of the early church in Nazareth.

219. See Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.262-6. The Jews of Galilee joined with the Persians as they marched through the area in 614, and helped them take Jerusalem where, after the Persians had given the Jews jurisdiction, they joined the Persians in destroying churches and killing Christians. It would appear that the charge that the Nazareth Jews killed Christians and destroyed churches was born of the fact that they were known as being among those who did these things in Jerusalem. The archaeological and literary evidence shows that while the Jews may well have looted the basilica in Nazareth, they left it standing. There is no evidence of burning and the mosaics are intact.

220. Wilkinson, p.202-4.

221. So I have long believed and argued in my article of 1987: Taylor, "Graffito", p.147. Corbo appears to have reached the same conclusion independently later the same year, see Corbo, "Chiesa-sinagoga", pp.140-143.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

1. G. Orfali, Capharnaⁿum et ses ruines, Paris, 1922, pp.103-109.

2. Four volumes discussing the excavation of the octagonal structure have presented the findings there in a detailed manner: Cafarnao, Vol.I: V. C. Corbo, Gli edifici della città, Jerusalem, 1975; Vol.II: S. Loffreda, La ceramica, Jerusalem, 1974; Vol.III: A. Spijkerman, Catalogo delle monete della città, Jerusalem, 1975; Vol.IV: E. Testa, I graffiti della Casa di S. Pietro, Jerusalem, 1972. A discussion also appears in V. C. Corbo, The House of St. Peter at Capernaum (transl. by S. Saller of "La Casa di San Pietro a Cafarnao", LA 18, 1968, pp.5-54), Jerusalem, 1969. See also more popular publications: V. C. Corbo and S. Loffreda, New Memories of St. Peter by the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, 1969; B. Bagatti, Guida di Cafarnao, Jerusalem, 1970; S. Loffreda, Cafarnao, la città di Gesù, Jerusalem, 1978; idem, A Visit to Capernaum, Jerusalem, 1972, 1974 (repr. 1980); idem, Recovering Capernaum, Jerusalem, 1985.

3. Corbo, Edifici, p.56.

4. Ibid., p.54.

5. G. Foerster preferred a date in the early sixth

century: "Notes on Recent Excavations at Capernaum (Review Article)," IEJ 21, 1971, pp.207-211, at. p.210; Strange, on the other hand, considers it to have been begun in the late fourth century and finished in the fifth, J. F. Strange, "The Capernaum and Herodium Publications (Part 1)," BASOR 226, 1977, pp.65-73, at p.68, but he considers the date of the coins to be the date of the demolition and rebuilding, and this may be incorrect. The coins give only the earliest possible dates, not the dates per se, and other factors must be brought to bear upon the matter to establish a correct dating.

6. Cf. Procopius of Caesarea, Aedif. v.7. For the structure itself, see: A. M. Schneider, "Beiträge zur biblischen Landes- und Altertumskunde hervorgegangen aus der," ZDPV 68, 1951, pp.211-234; and see: Ovadiah, pp.140-142, fig. 143.

7. Corbo, Edifici, Fig. 2,3, Foto 13, Pl. VI:A; House, pp.11-12, 25-27.

8. Strange, p.67.

9. Cf. Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum, Leiden, 1923f, 8:134: ΑΙΘΟC ΕΚ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΡΑΝΙΟΥ.

10. This is an addition to the original, see Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, pp.120, 200-201.

11. For Corbo's discussion, see Chapter 2 of Edifici, pp.59-74.

12. See J. G. Davies, The Secular Use of Church Buildings, London, 1968, pp.5-8.

13. M. Rostovtsev, Dura Europos and its Art, Oxford, 1938, pp.129-134.

14. Davies, p.8.

15. This appellation is probably Peter the Deacon's; Egeria herself would probably have said "Peter the apostle", so Wilkinson, Egeria, p.194, n.7.

16. Transl. by Wilkinson, p.194. Paula visited Capernaum but Jerome gives no details as to what was there, cf. Jerome, Ep. cviii.13.5.

17. Testa, Graffiti, pp.98-99, 148, 183; Loffreda, Recovering Capharnaum, pp.29-30; cf. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, pp.100f, 127-128; Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.21, 128-132.

18. Corbo, Edifici, pp.71-72.

19. Strange, p.68.
20. Ibid., p.69.
21. Corbo, Edifici, pp.75-106.
22. Ibid., p.76; idem, House, p.37.
23. Corbo, House, p.39.
24. This area of Capernaum was excavated by V. Tzaferis, along with Michal Peleg, Joseph Blenkinsopp, James Russell, John Laughlan and George Knight. I am grateful to them for permitting me to participate in the 1986 excavation in Capernaum, for discussing the site with me and for sharing their ideas. See also: V. Tzaferis, K. Meidonis and E. Kessin, "What became of Ancient Capernaum?" Christian News from Israel 27/2, 1979, pp.74-77; V. Tzaferis, "New Archaeological Evidence on Ancient Capernaum," BA 46, 1983, pp.198-204.
25. See Loffreda, Recovering Capernaum, pp.8-9.
26. Cf. Corbo, Edifici, p.97, Loffreda, Ceramica, p.114.
28. Corbo, pp.79-98, cf. Loffreda, pp.113-117.
29. Corbo, p.80.
30. So Loffreda, p.116: "Fra la massiciata A e la massiciata B compare una serie di pavimenti in battuto di calce."
31. Corbo, p.80.
32. See Loffreda, p.117.
33. Corbo, p.97.
34. Loffreda, p.116; idem, Recovering Capernaum, p.57. No description or drawings are offered by either Corbo or Loffreda. Two Herodian lamps found between basalt blocks in the eastern wall do not provide any means of dating the floor.
35. Spijkerman, no. 142, p.26.
36. Ibid., no. 552, p.59.
37. Loffreda, Monete, p.114.
38. Spijkerman, n.3, 4, 18; p.13, 15.
39. Corbo, p.98.

40. Corbo, House, p.40.
41. Ibid., pp.61, 66-67.
42. Testa, p.40.
43. Corbo, Edifici, p.98.
44. Corbo, House, pp.58-61.
45. Corbo's identification of room 2 as an atrium is, incidentally, without foundation, cf. House, p.57.
46. Testa writes: "Già prendendoli in blocco, i graffiti ci testimoniano la presenza di fedeli di lingua greca ..., di lingua aramaica, di lingua estrangela e di lingua latina. La maggior parte costoro devono esser stati pellegrini, arrivati sia dal famoso "quadrilatero" difeso dai Minim (Seforis ..., Nazaret ..., Tiberias ...) sia da regioni più lontane." but "Tuttavia, pensiamo che la maggior parte fossero giudeo-cristiani, o viventi sotto l'influsso religioso di costoro." Graffiti, p.183. Therefore, according to Testa, there was some kind of Jewish-Christian pilgrimage movement!
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., n.95, p.93, cf. Tav. XXIII.
49. See Diringer, Alphabet, Vol. 2, fig. 15.21.
50. Testa, n.96, p.93, Tav. XXIII.
51. Ibid., n.97, p.93, Tav. XXIII.
52. Ibid., n.98, p.94, Tav. XXIII, Fig. 12.
53. Ibid., Tav. XXII.
54. See Testa's n.117, which reads B0H0H0- or B0H0HC. Testa reads "P0H0H0(C)", ibid., p.161, Tav.3, Fig. 16.
55. Ibid., n.99, p.95, Tav. XXIII.
56. Ibid., n.100, p.96-7, Tav. XXIII.
57. Ibid., n.101, p.97-99, Tav. XXIII, Fig. 12.
58. Ibid., n.102, p.99-100, Tav. XXIV, Fig. 12.
59. Ibid., n.103, p.100-103, Tav. XXIV.
60. Ibid., n.104, p.104, Tav. XXIV.

61. See Corbo, Edifici, pp.107-111.
62. Strange, p.69.
63. See Corbo, House, pp.58-9.
64. Ovadiah, pp.181-182.
65. For a good discussion of the architecture see: Marilyn J. S. Chiat, Handbook of Synagogue Architecture (Brown Judaic Studies 29), Chico, Ca., 1982, pp.89-97; H. Shanks, Judaism in Stone, New York/Washington, 1979, pp.56-77; Sukenik, Ancient Synagogues, pp.7-21, 52-3.
66. C. Wilson, "Notes on the Jewish Synagogues in Galilee", PEFQSt 1, 1869, pp.37-41.
67. Kohl and Watzinger, pp.14-21.
68. Orfali, pp.21-101.
69. V. Corbo, S. Loffreda, A. Spijkerman, La sinagoga di Cafarnao dopo gli scavi del 1969, Jerusalem, 1970; V. C. Corbo, "Nuovi scavi archeologici nella sinagoga di Cafarnao," LA 20, 1970, pp.7-52; idem, Edifici, Part Two; idem, "La sinagoga di Cafarnao dopo gli scavi del 1972," LA 22, 1972, pp.204-235; S. Loffreda, "The Synagogue of Capernaum: Archaeological Evidence for its late Chronology," LA 22, 1972, pp.5-29; idem, "The Late Chronology of the Synagogue of Capernaum," IEJ 23, 1973, pp.36-72 and "A Reply to the Editor" p. 184; idem, "The Late Chronology of the Synagogue of Capernaum," in Levine (ed.), Ancient Synagogues, pp.52-56; idem, "La ceramica della sinagoga di Cafarnao," LA 20, 1970, pp.53-105; A. Spijkerman, "Monete della sinagoga di Cafarnao," LA 20, 1970, pp.106-116.
70. S. Loffreda, "Potsherds from a Sealed Level of the Synagogue at Capernaum," LA 29, 1979, pp.215-220.
71. Kohl and Watzinger, p.4-40, 219.
72. Capharnaüm et Bethsaïde, Paris, 1921, p. 163.
73. Orfali, p.67.
74. D. Sapir and D. Ne'eman, Capharnaum, Tel Aviv, 1967; Foerster, "Notes," pp.207-209; idem, "The Recent Excavations at Capharnaum," Qadmoniot 4, 1971, pp.126-131 (Hebrew); idem, "Galilean Synagogues and their Relationship to Hellenistic and Roman Art and Architecture," Dissertation submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1972, Chapter III; M. Avi-Yonah, "Editor's Note," IEJ 23, 1973, pp.43-45; M. Fischer, "The

Corinthian Capitals of the Capernaum Synagogue: A Revision," Levant 18, 1986, pp.131-142. It should be noted that one exception to the usual Israeli view is that of Z. U. Maoz, who believes that the synagogue itself was built by Christians, see: "The Synagogue at Capernaum - A Christian Pilgrimage Site?", Proceedings of the Eighth Archaeological Conference in Israel, Jerusalem, 1981, p.21 (Hebrew).

75. Strange, pp.69-71.
76. Corbo, Edifici, p.121.
77. Strange, p.70.
78. Cf. Foerster, "Notes," pp.208-209.
79. Avi-Yonah, "Editor's Note," p.45.)
80. Shanks, p.72.
81. See Avi-Yonah, The Jews, pp.176-181.
82. Ibid., p.181.
83. Ibid., pp.208-229.
84. Ibid., p.237-8.
85. Ibid., pp.238-239.
86. Ibid., pp.221-223; 239-40; idem, "The Economics of Byzantine Palestine", IEJ 8, 1958, pp.39-51.
87. Literally: the contrast between the imported white limestone of the synagogue and the black basalt of the rest of the town is powerful.
88. Loffreda, Recovering Capernaum, pp.43-49; V.C. Corbo, "Resti della sinagoga del primo secolo a Cafarnao," in Studia Hierosolymitana, III, Jerusalem, 1982, pp.313-357.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

1. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, pp.38-43.
2. Ibid., pp.44-45.
3. J. T. Milik, "Une lettre de Siméon Bar Kocheba", RB 60, 1953, pp.276-294.
4. Ibid., p.277.

5. Ibid.; Mancini, p.38.
6. E. Testa, "Hgll'ym - nome dispregiativa dei Giudeo-Cristiani", Euntes Docete 10, 1957, pp.281-284.
7. Y. Yadin, The Message of the Scrolls, New York, 1957, pp.71-72.
8. Mancini, p.40.
9. J. T. Milik, Les Grottes de Murabba'at (Discoveries in the Judean Desert II), Oxford, 1961, pp.159-61.
10. Mancini uses the article by M. Delcor, "Murabba'at", in Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supp. 5, col. 1393-4; Mancini, p.40.
11. J.T. Milik, "Une inscription et une lettre en araméen christo-palestinien", in RB 60, 1953, pp.533-539.
12. J. T. Milik, "The Monastery of Kastellion", Biblica 42, 1961, pp.25-26.
13. Mancini, p.42, cf. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.17.
14. M. Baillet, "Un livret magique en christo-palestinien à l'Université de Louvain", Le Muséon 76, 1963, pp.375-401.
15. "Il y eut donc une magie chrétienne, contre laquelle l'orthodoxie dut souvent réagir. Et ce fut sans doute dans les milieux monastiques que la transmission des secrets dut être la plus fidèle, comme la fermentation des idées y fut la plus dangereuse.", *ibid.*, p.401.
16. Mancini, p.43.
17. Bagatti, Circumcision, p.17.
18. Naveh's "Jewish" script, p.112ff.
19. See A. Desreumaux, "Les matériaux du syro-palestinien", unpublished thesis presented to the University of Paris X-Nanterre, October, 1979, p.6. The most important early study is that of F. Schulthess, Grammatik des christlichpalästinischen Aramäisch, Tübingen, 1924.
20. See B. Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, Oxford, 1977, pp.75-80.
21. J. Fitzmyer, A Wandering Aramean, Missoula, 1979, p.62. The same is given by Naveh, pp.126-127 and E. Y. Kutscher, Studies in Galilean Aramaic, Ramat Gan, 1976, pp.4-5.

22. Naveh, p.127. Examples of the different dialects may be found in An Aramaic Handbook, ed. by F. Rosenthal, Wiesbaden, 1967.
23. Desreumaux, p.6.
24. Metzger, p.76.
25. McGiffert, pp.4, 47.
26. Desreumaux, p.4.
27. Ibid., p.5.
28. M. Bar-Asher, "Palestinian Syriac Studies, Source-Texts, Traditions and Grammatical Problems", unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1977. See also, for the 10th century (?) Syro-Palestinian Version: The Bible in the Syropalestinian Version, ed. M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, Jerusalem, 1973.
29. Cf. M. Black, Rituale Melchitorum: A Palestinian Euchologion, Stuttgart, 1938; idem, A Christian Palestinian Syriac Horologion, Cambridge, 1954; Metzger, p.76.
30. Many of these have been published by the Franciscans: M. Halloun and R. Rubin, "Palestinian Syriac Inscription from 'En Suweinit", LA 31, 1981, pp.291-298; E. Puech, "L'inscription christo-palestinienne d'Ayoun Mousa (Mont Nebo)", LA 34, 1984, pp.319-328; idem, "L'inscription christo-palestinienne du monastère d'el-Quweisme", LA 34, 1984, pp.341-346; idem, "Une inscription syriaque palestinienne", LA 36, 1986, pp.309-316; idem, "Une inscription syriaque palestinienne: Note additionnelle", LA 37, 1987, pp.349-352; see also, Naveh, "Lamp Inscriptions", who publishes a lamp inscription in Syro-Palestinian; C. Dauphin, "Chronique archéologique: Shelomi", RB 85, 1978, pp.108-109; Jacques, "A Palestinian-Syriac Inscription".
31. A. Alt, "Ein Denkmal des Judenchristentums im Ostjordanland?", Palästinajahrbuch 25, 1929, pp.89-95.
32. Mancini, p.44.
33. Frey, CIJ, Vol.II, p.100.
34. Ibid.
35. Mancini, Archaeological Discoveries, pp.31-38; Bagatti, Circumcision, pp.270-272; Testa, Simbolismo, pp.52-66.

36. Mancini, p.31.
37. Bagatti, p.270.
38. See Chapter One.
39. Goodenough, Vol.2, p.209.
40. The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, ed. H. D. Betz, Chicago/London, 1986, p.xlvii.
41. Ibid.
42. For a discussion with an extensive bibliography on Jewish magic see: P. Alexander, "Incantations and Books of Magic" in Emil Schürer, The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ, III/1, edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Goodman, Edinburgh, 1986, pp.342-379.
43. Mancini, pp.32-33; Testa, 64-66; Bagatti, pp.270, 272.
44. See Naveh and Shaked, Amulets and Magic Bowls, p.61.
45. L. -H. Vincent, "Amulette judéo-araméenne", RB 5/17, 1908, pp.382-394, cf. Frey, CIJ No.1185.
46. Jastrow, p.1591-2.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., p.129.
49. Naveh and Shaked, p.60.
50. Ibid., p.62.
51. A. H. de Villefosse, "Tablette magique de Beyrouth conservée au Musée du Louvre", in Florilegium Melchior de Vogüé, Paris, 1909, pp.287-295.
52. Bagatti, p.281.
53. A. Dupont-Sommer, La doctrine gnostique de la lettre "waw" d'après une lamelle araméenne inédite, Paris, 1946, Pls.1 and 2.
54. Testa, pp.59-64, and so too Bagatti, pp.270-271.
55. C. H. Gordon, BASOR 110, 1948 pp.26-27, cf. the reply by Dupont-Sommer in BASOR 111, 1948, p.27.
56. Naveh and Shaked, p.62.

57. Ibid., pp.64-66.
58. Ibid., p.66.
59. Ibid., pp.62-63, 69.
60. M. Schwab, "Une amulette judéo-araméenne", in Journal Asiatique 194, 1906, pp.5-15.
61. Bagatti, pp.272-3; Testa, pp.52-59.
62. Cf. Betz, pp.253, 276, 311.
63. Ibid., pp.17, 88, 122, 149, 307, 311, 319, 321.
64. Ibid., pp.129, 150, 195, 270, 273, 275.
65. Ibid., pp.195, 276.
66. Ibid., p.274.
67. Ibid., p.195.
68. M. Avi-Yonah, "Abbreviations", p.105.
69. B. Kanaels, "Ancient Jewish Coins and their Historical Importance", BA 26, 1963, pp.38-62, at p.48f.
70. However, see: I. Weinstock, "The Alphabet of Metatron and its Interpretation", in Temirin 2, 1981, pp.51-76.
71. See M. Piccirillo, The Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Museum (Museum no.6), Jerusalem, 1983, p.108.
72. "I Giudeo-Cristiani e l'anello di Salomone", RSR 1972, pp.151-160; cf. "Altre medaglie di Salomone cavaliere e loro origine", RAC 47, 1971, pp.331-342.
73. Solomon spearing Lilith, sometimes shown as a snake see: Naveh and Saked, pp.104-122, cf. 188-201; Goodenough, Vol.2, pp.227-235; Bonner, Magical Amulets, pp.208-221. See above: Chapter Eight, note 14 (on p.485).
74. R. Reich, "A Samaritan Amulet from Nahariya", RB 92, 1985, pp.383-388; A. Hamburger, "A Greco-Samaritan Amulet from Caesarea", IEJ 9, 1959, pp.43-45.
75. E. Petersen, IC 000C, Göttingen, 1926; N. Makhouly, "Rock-Cut Tombs at el-Jish", QDAP 8, 1939, pp.45-50 at p.49, Pl.XXXII.1; M. Piccirillo, "Un braccialetto cristiano della regione di Betlem", LA 29, 1979, pp.244-252, Pl.s 25-27; DACL cols. 1847-1850; L. Y. Rahmani, "On Some Byzantine Brass Rings in the State Collections", Atiqot, Eng. Series, 17, 1985, pp.168-181, at pp.177-178.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAPS

1. Known Christian communities before 325.
2. Region of dense Samaritan settlement.
3. Pagan cult sites in Palestine during the third century A.D.

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Fake figurine from the Shapira forgery collection, Palestine Exploration Fund, London.
2. Drawing of object from the Shapira forgery collection, Palestine Exploration Fund, London.
3. Object shown to Fr. M. Piccirillo in Jordan.
4. Object shown to Fr. M. Piccirillo in Jordan.
5. Cave cut in the east side of the Rock of Calvary: internal masonry, niche carved to right and large blocks from broken Constantinian wall.
6. Cave cut in the east side of the Rock of Calvary: Constantinian blocks built to support and face the rock, broken through on right.
7. Bethany Cave: barely legible red drawing (top) and other incised graffiti.
8. Nazareth: view of agricultural installations looking from east over press 34 (bottom left). Mouths of silos 35, 36 and 38 in middle foreground. In the background, subterranean loci 40 and 41.
9. Nazareth: the Conon mosaic (mosaic no. 2).
10. Nazareth: mosaic 1a.
11. Nazareth: mosaic 3 in cave 29 (top) with part of mosaic 2.
12. Nazareth: basin paved with mosaic in the Church of St. Joseph.
13. Nazareth: rock-cut steps on the west side of the Chapel of the Angel.
14. Nazareth: earliest plaster decoration in cave 29,

with modern wall.

15. Nazareth: earliest plaster decoration in cave 29 (detail).
16. Nazareth: earliest plaster decoration in cave 29, detail of wreath.
17. Nazareth: plastered stone showing Armenian graffiti.
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25. Capernaum: the House of Peter: Syriac graffiti incised in plaster.
26. Capernaum: the House of Peter: Greek graffiti incised in plaster.
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28. Obverse of same amulet.

I would like to thank the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum for use of photos 3-6, 8-28 and the Palestine Exploration Fund for 1 and 2.

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1. Graffiti scratched on ossuaries found on the Mount of Offence, Jerusalem.
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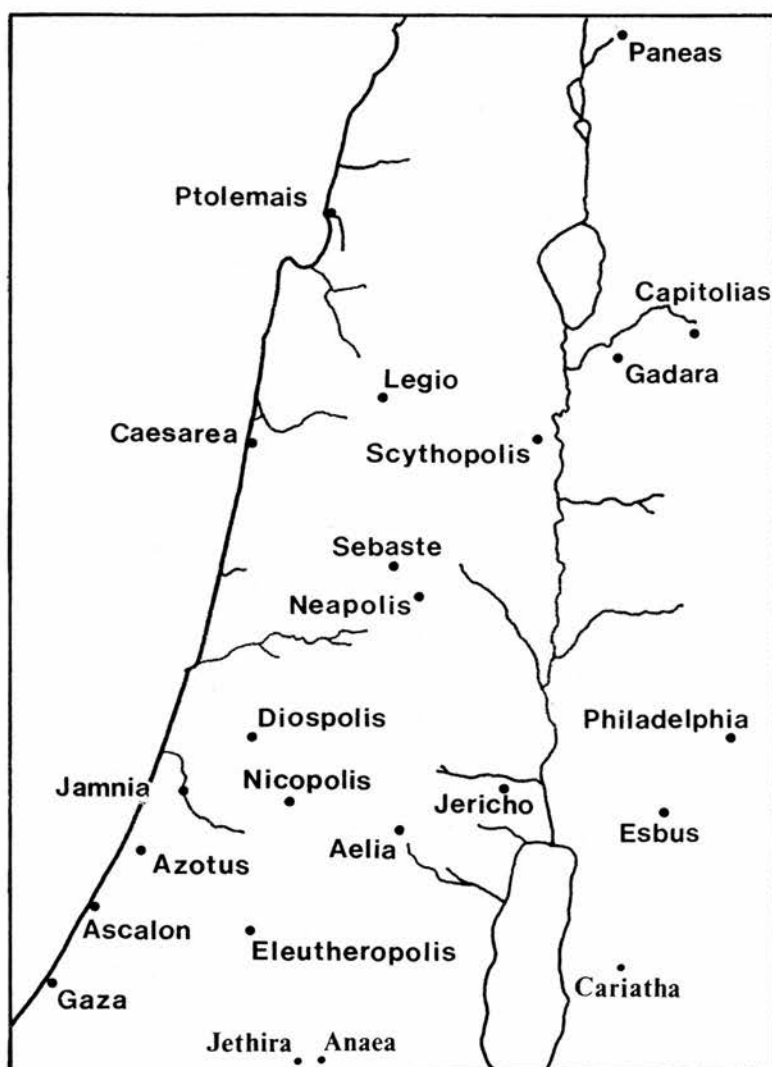
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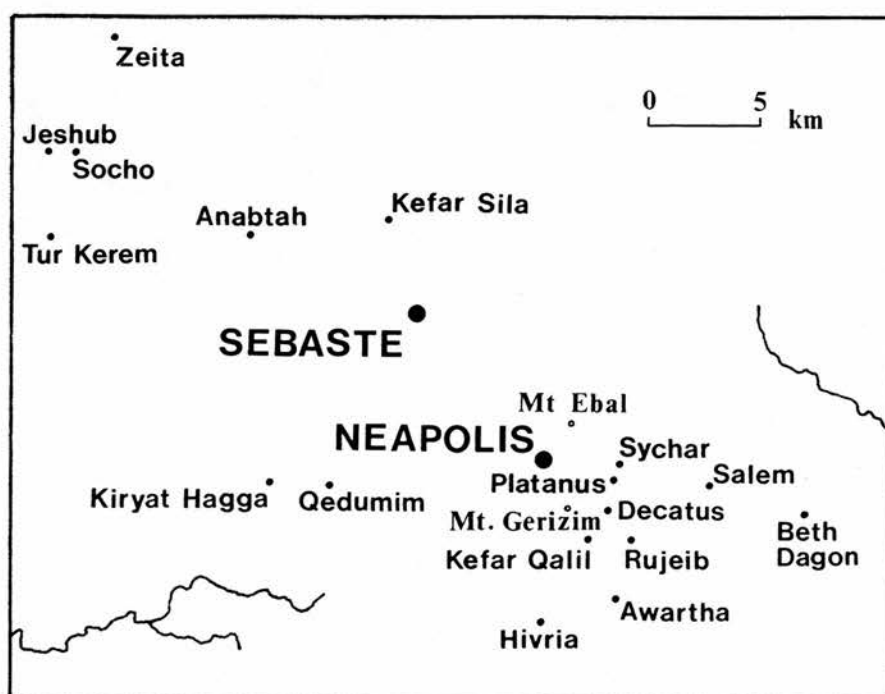
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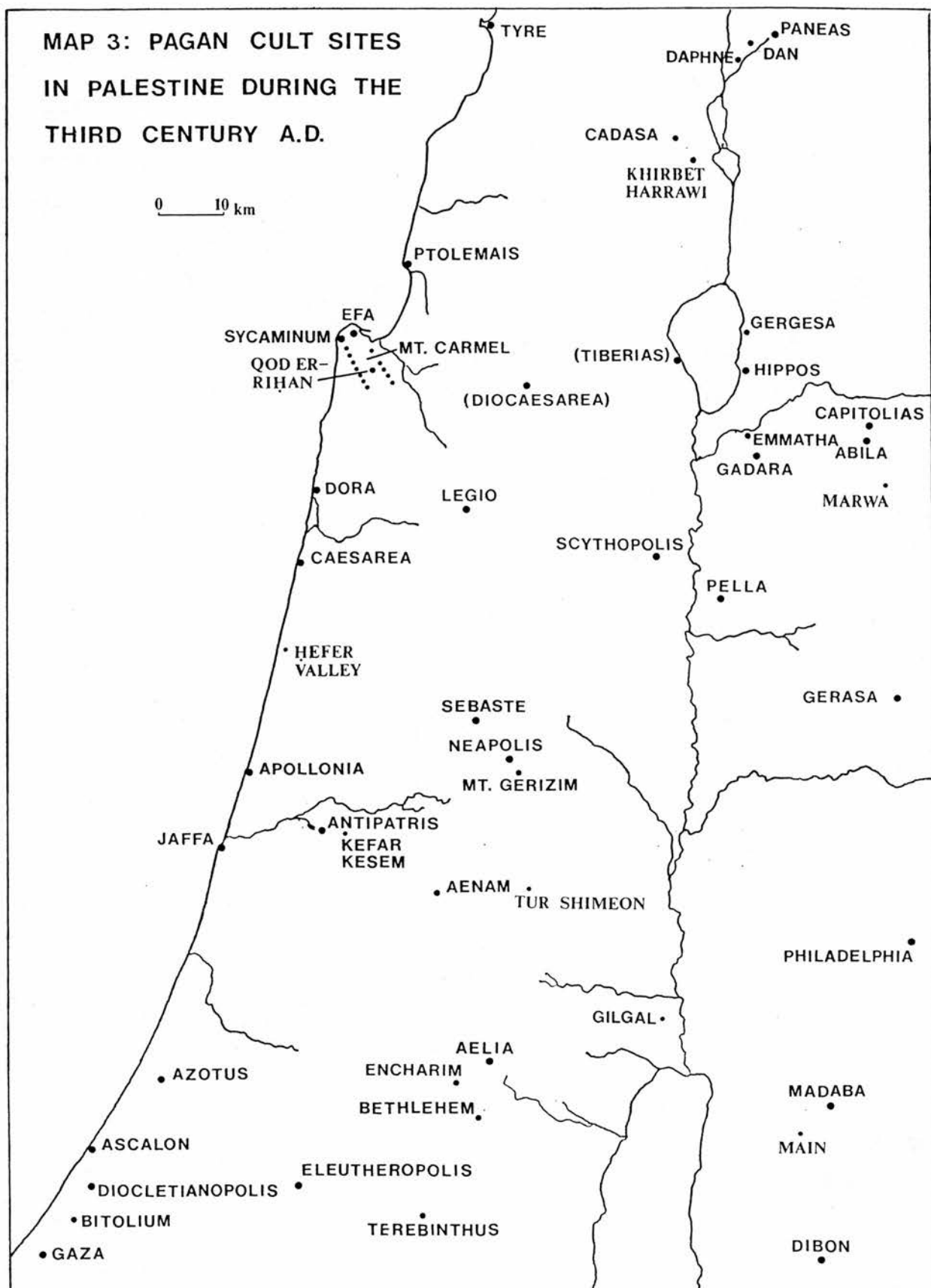


Map 1: Known Christian communities before 325.



Map 2: Region of dense Samaritan settlement.

MAP 3: PAGAN CULT SITES
IN PALESTINE DURING THE
THIRD CENTURY A.D.





SHAPIRA'S 2ND COLLECTION



Shapira's 2nd Collection
Canaanite
2000 B.C.

2



3



4

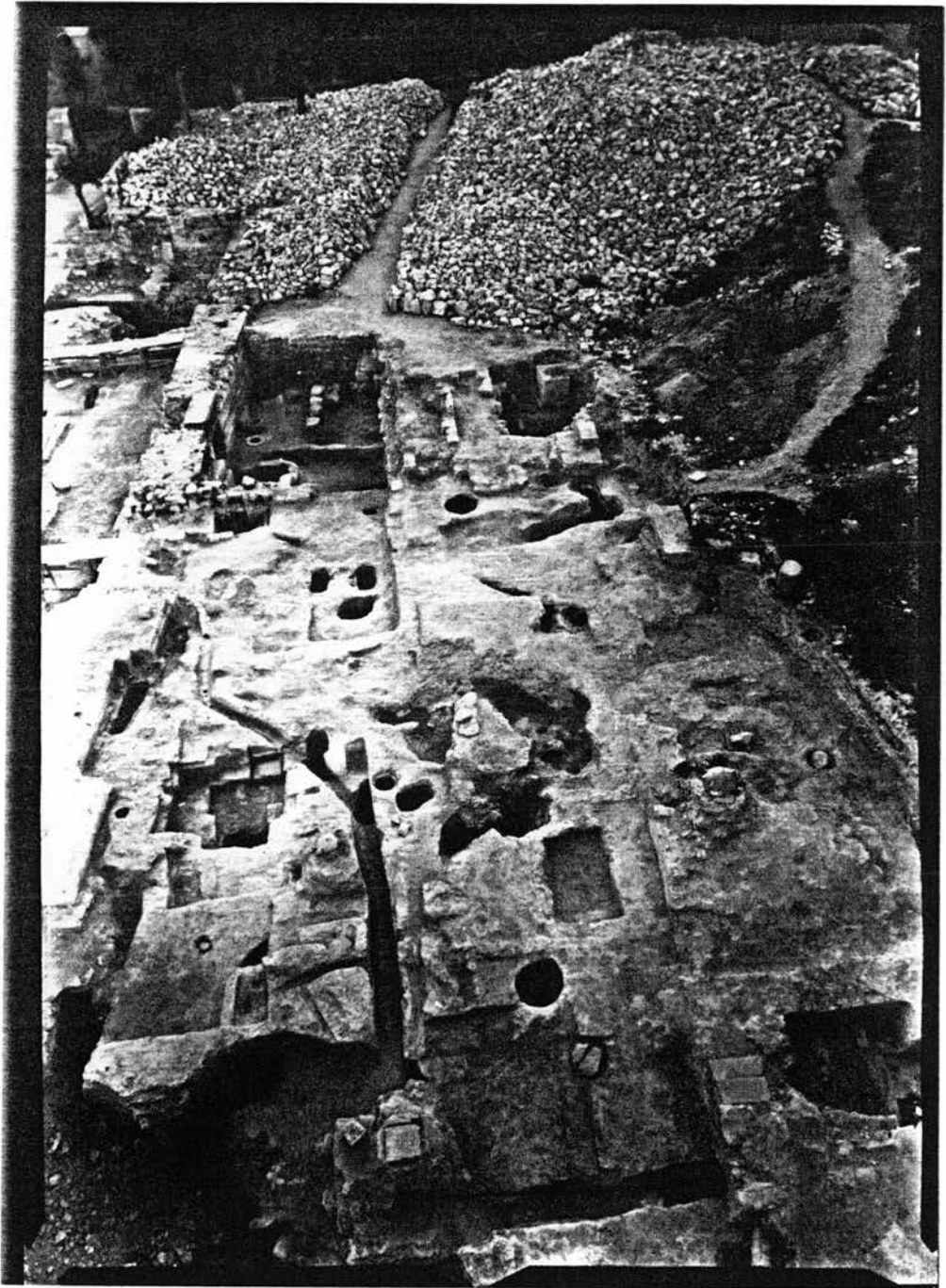


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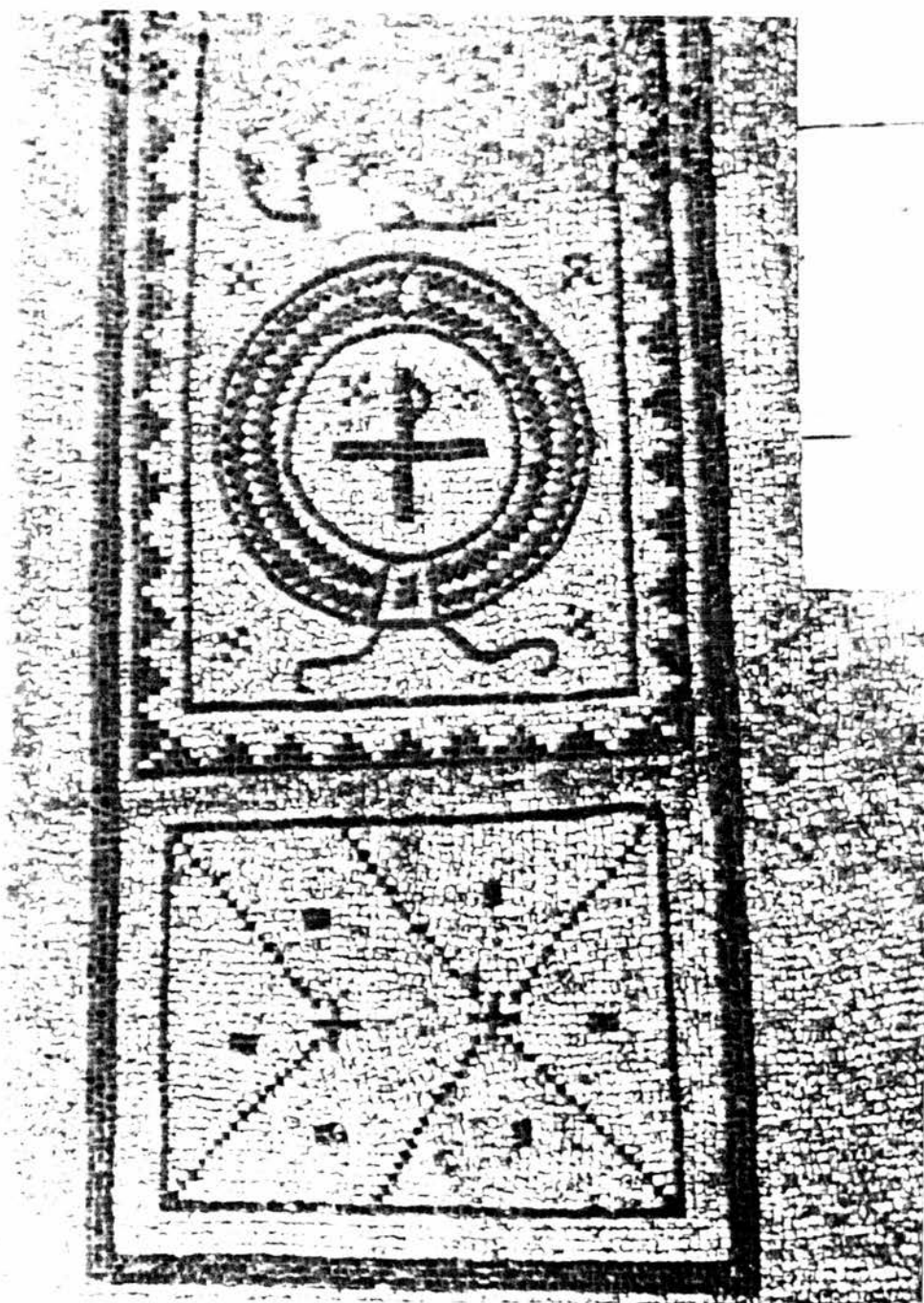


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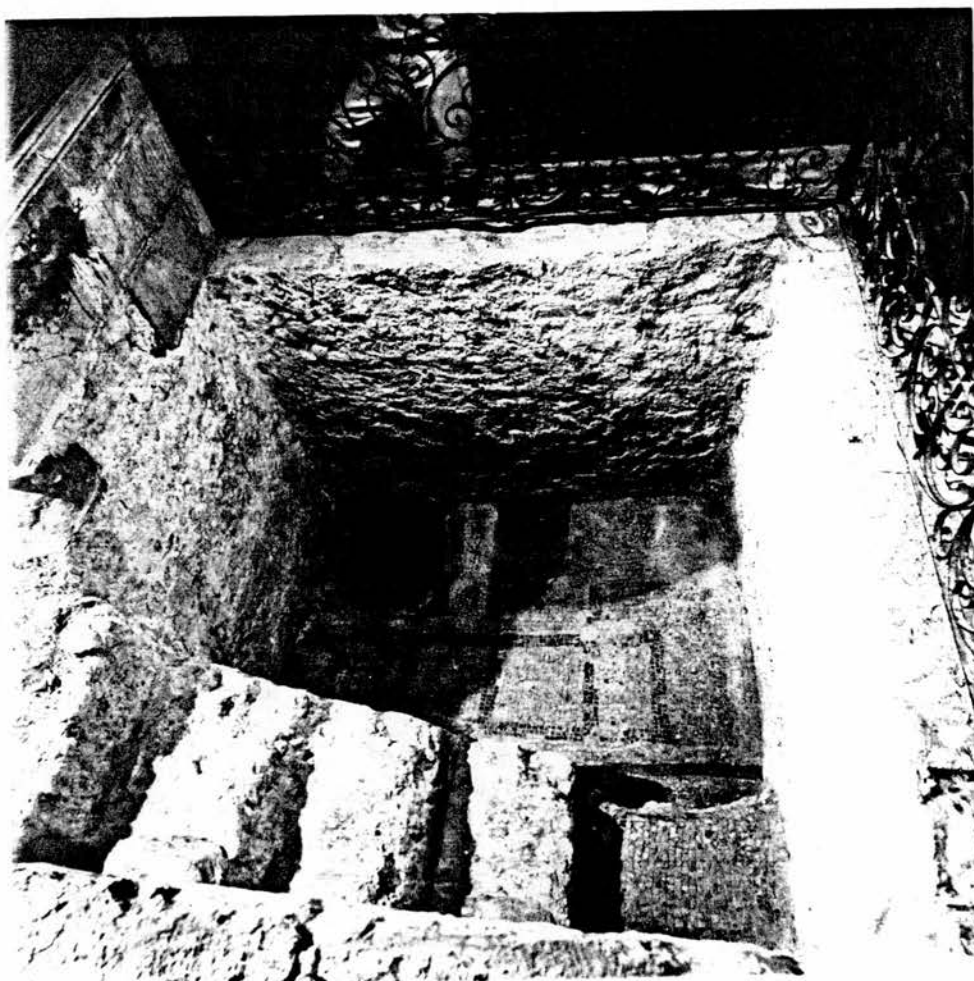


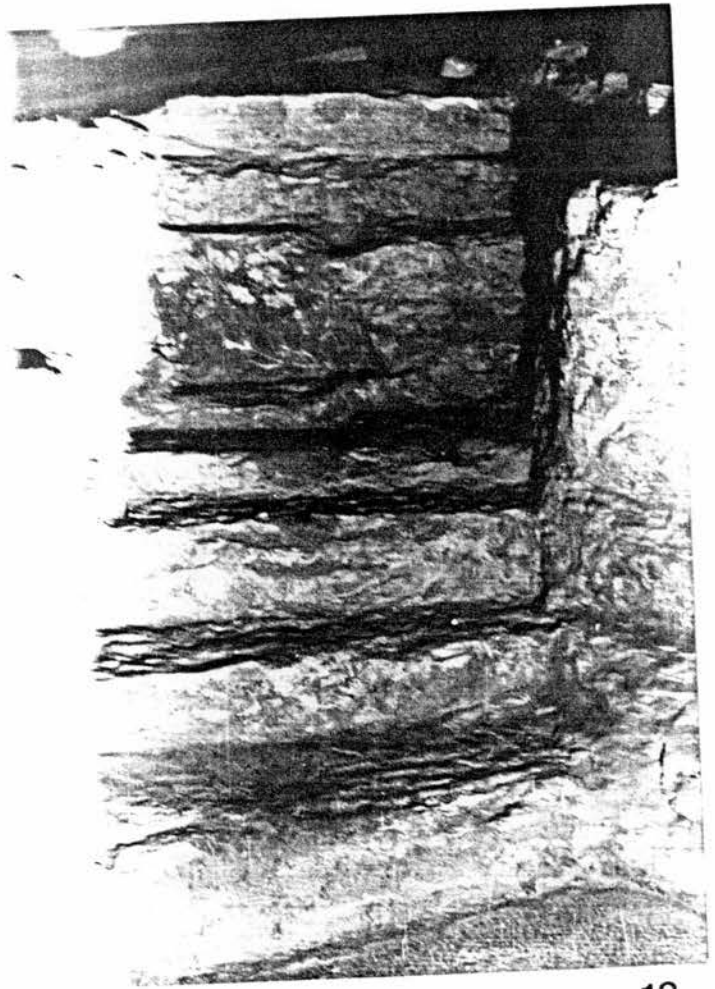






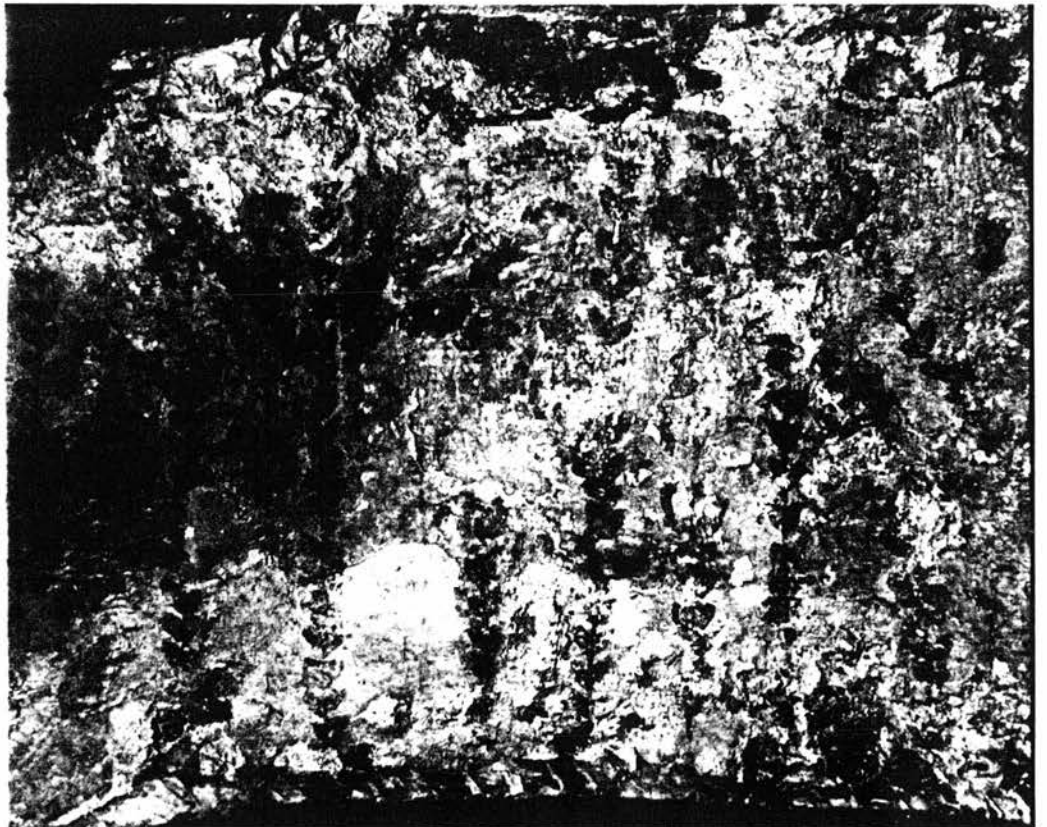




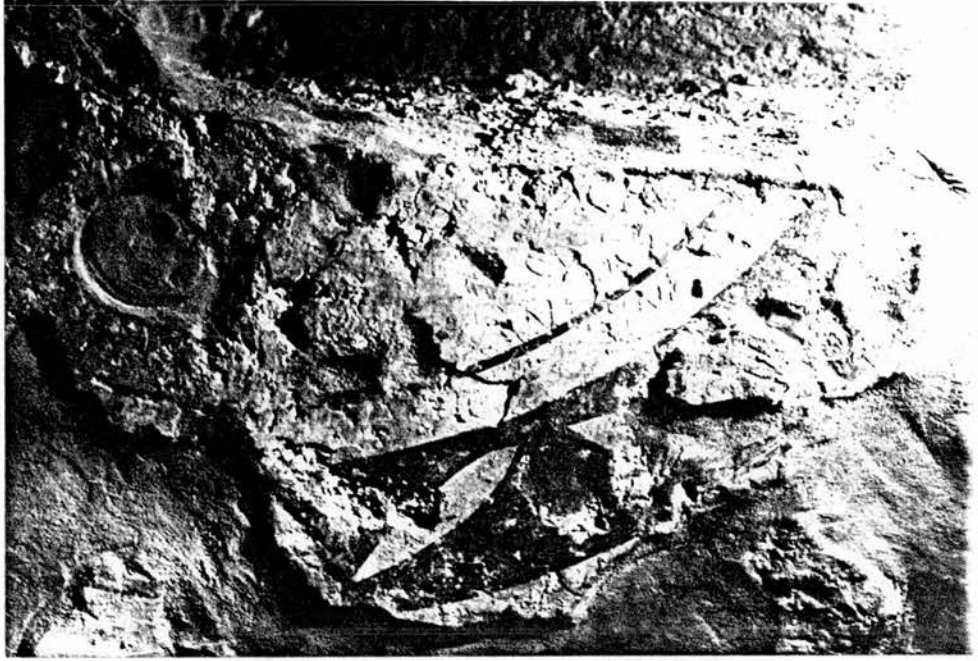


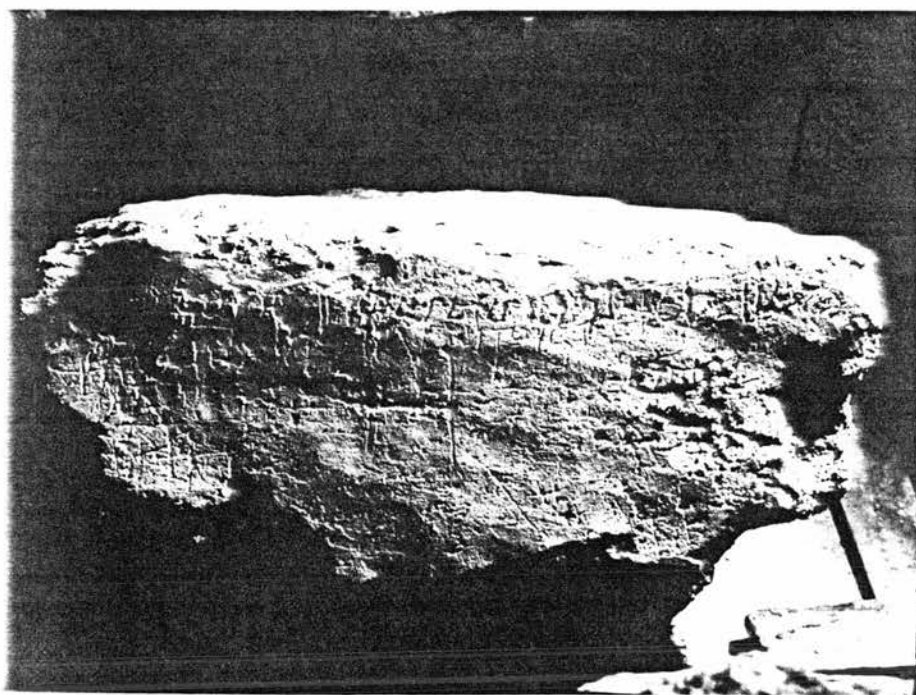


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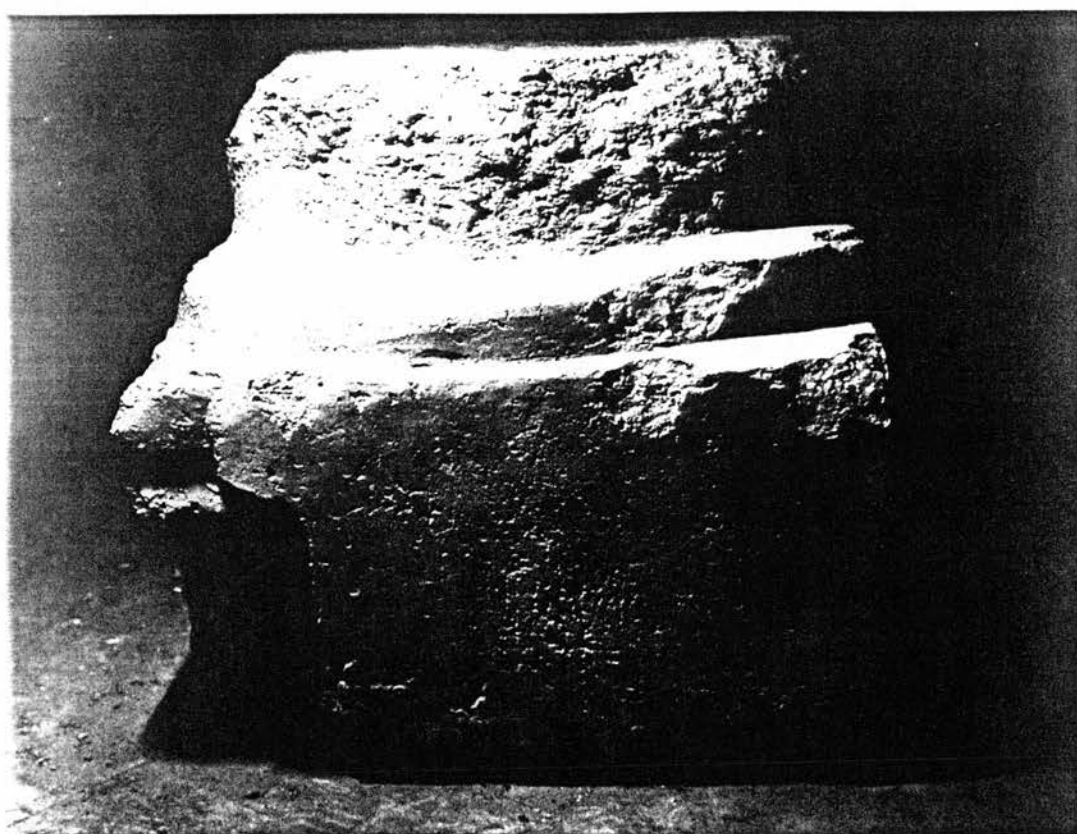
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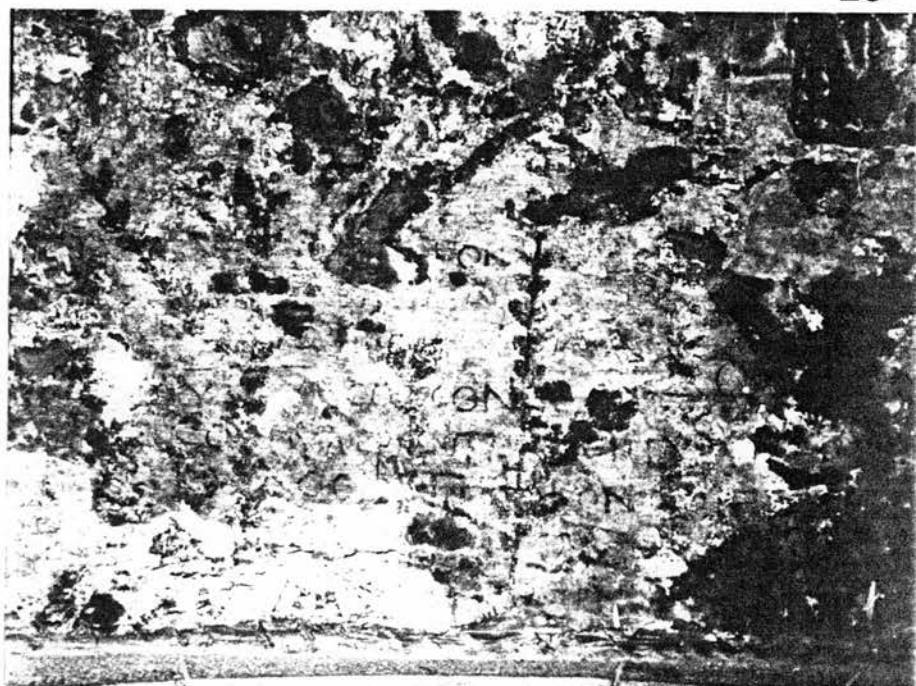
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18



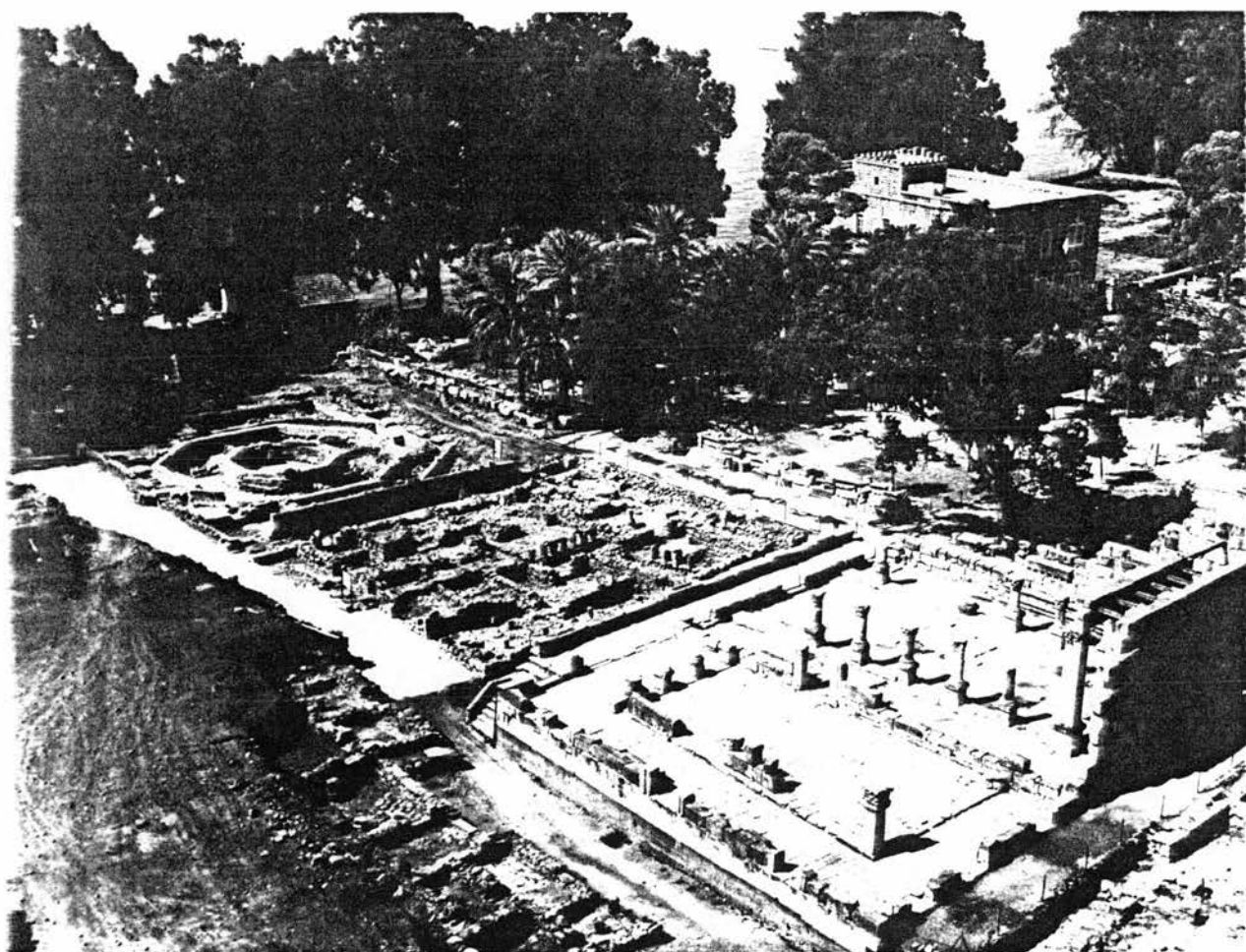


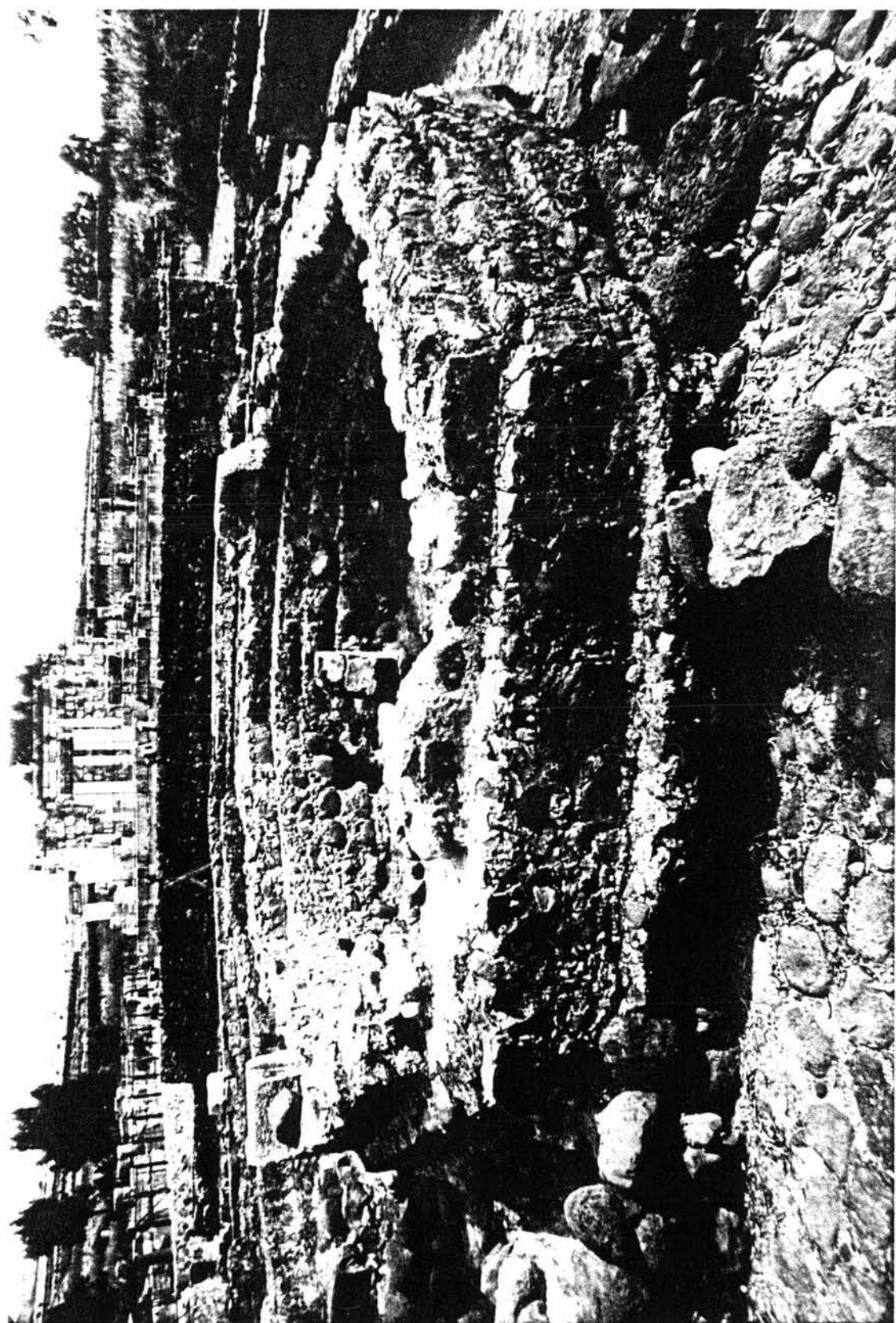
19



20











25



26



27



28



1.1



1.2

1.3



1.4



FIGURE 1. After Clermont-Ganneau, 1899.

FIGURE 2.

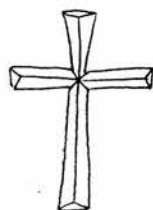
After Clermont-
Ganneau, 1899.



2.1



2.2



2.4

2.3

1HCOYc/or

3.1

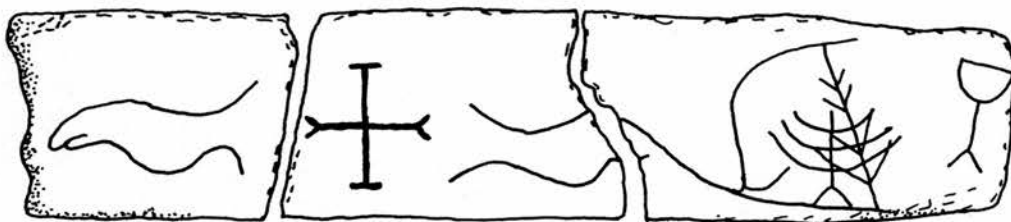
1HCOY(A)Wθ

3.2

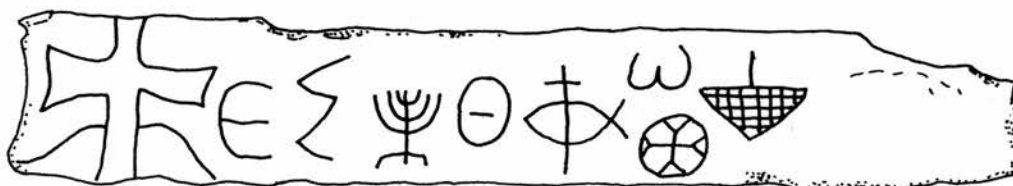
FIGURE 3. After Sukenik, 1947.



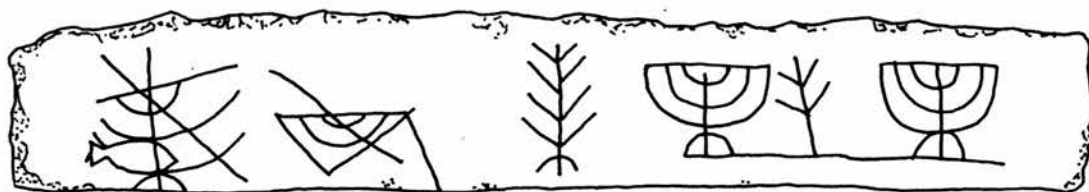
FIGURE 4.



5.1



5.2



5.3

FIGURE 5. After S. Gibson
(Dauphin, 1984)

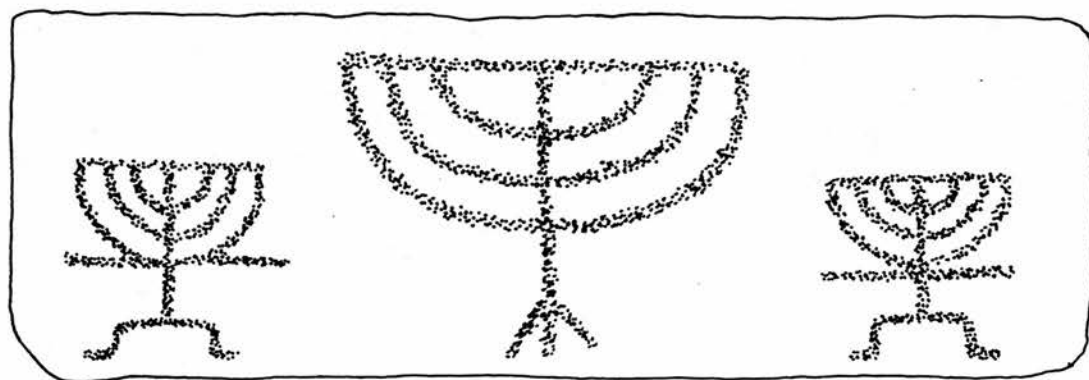


FIGURE 6. After B. Wool (Dauphin, 1982).

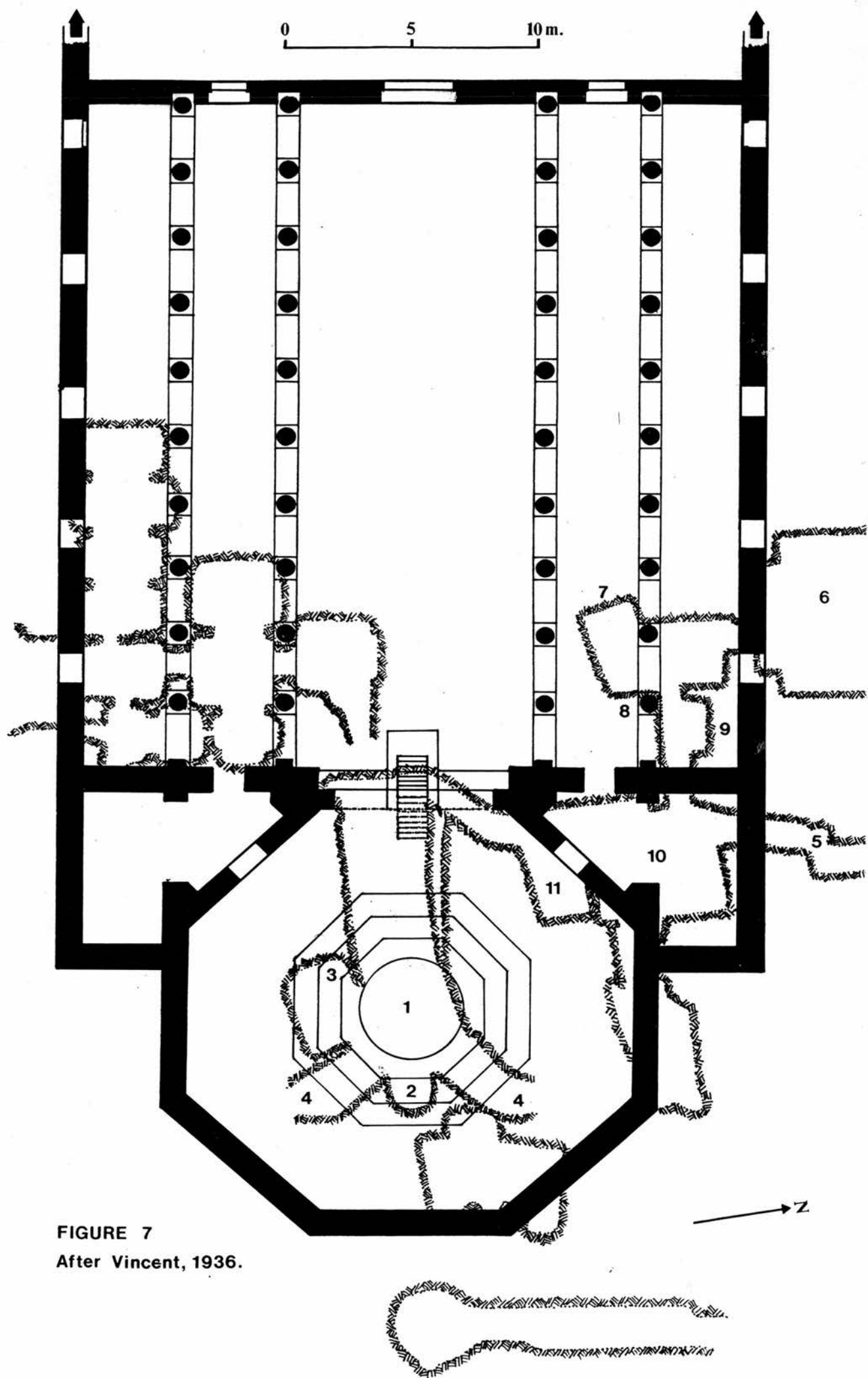
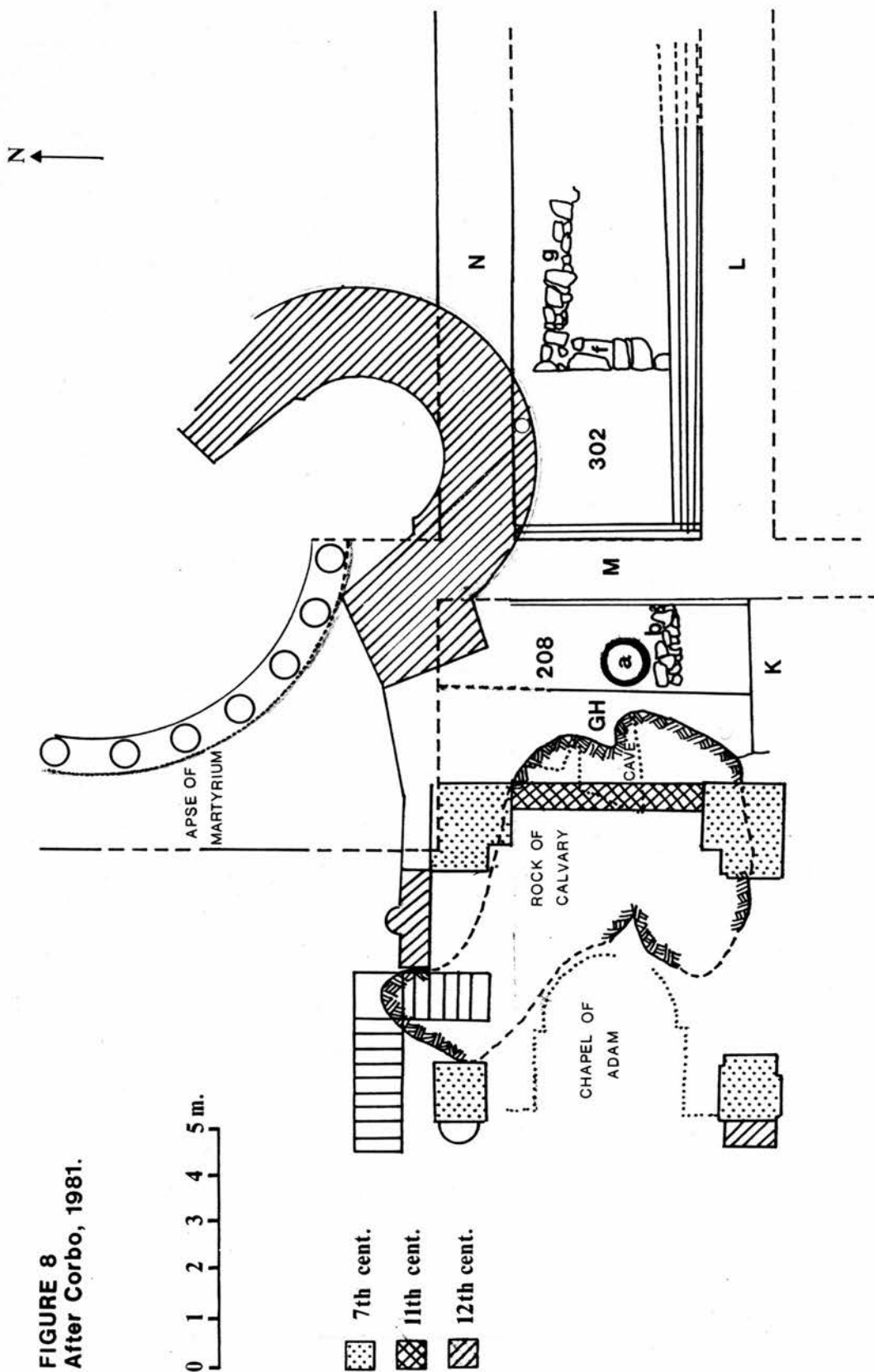


FIGURE 7
After Vincent, 1936.

FIGURE 8
After Corbo, 1981.



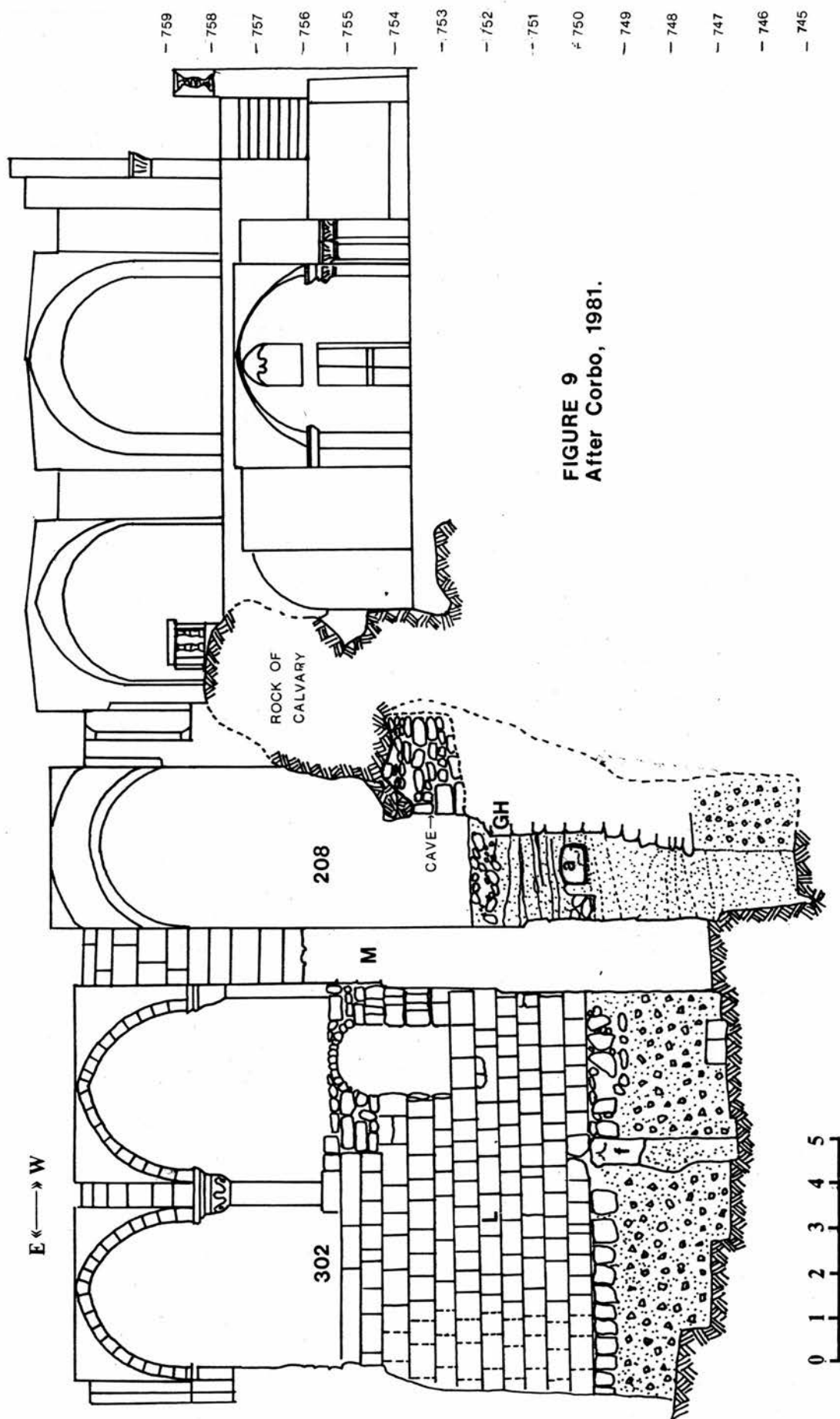
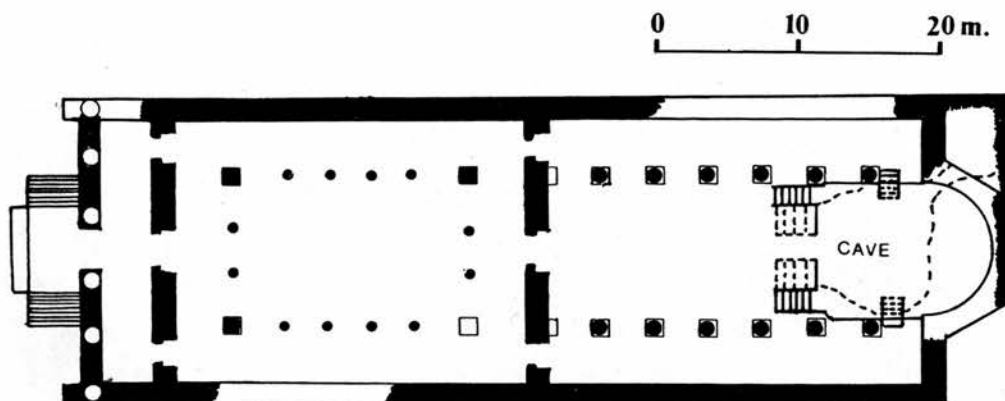


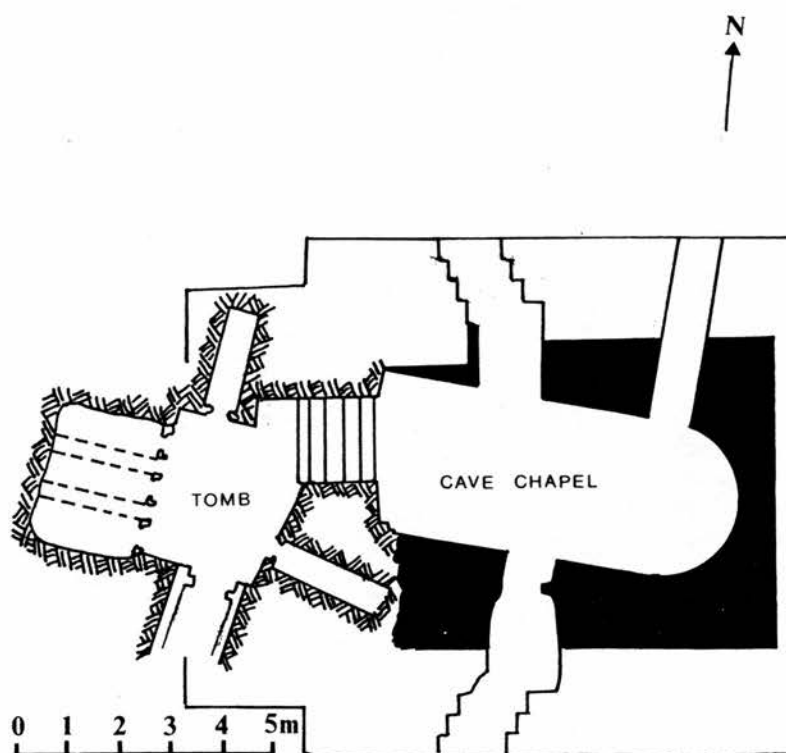
FIGURE 9
After Corbo, 1981.

— 759
— 758
— 757
— 756
— 755
— 754
— 753
— 752
— 751
— 750
— 749
— 748
— 747
— 746
— 745



A: After Vincent, 1914.

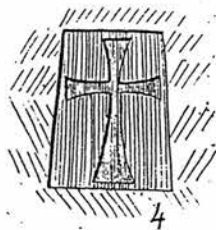
FIGURE 10.



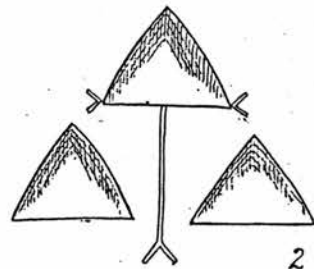
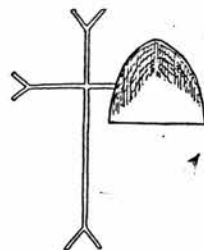
B: After Wilkinson, 1978.

KHURBET EL- 'AIN

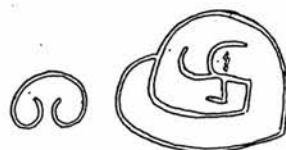
SKETCH OF CAVE



4



2



3



Macalister
1890
5/1/1900

P.E.F.

FIGURE II.
Drawing by Macalister.

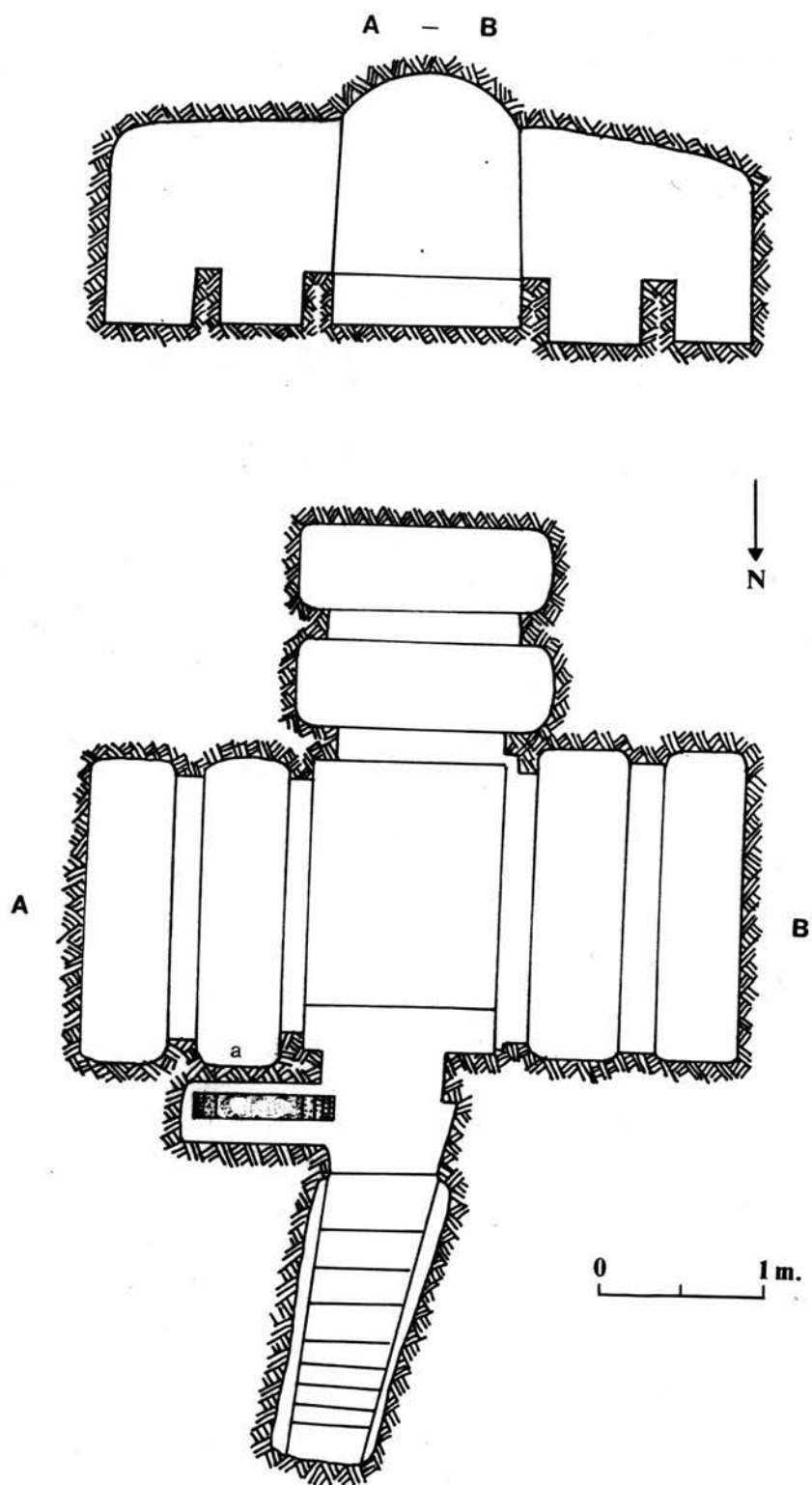
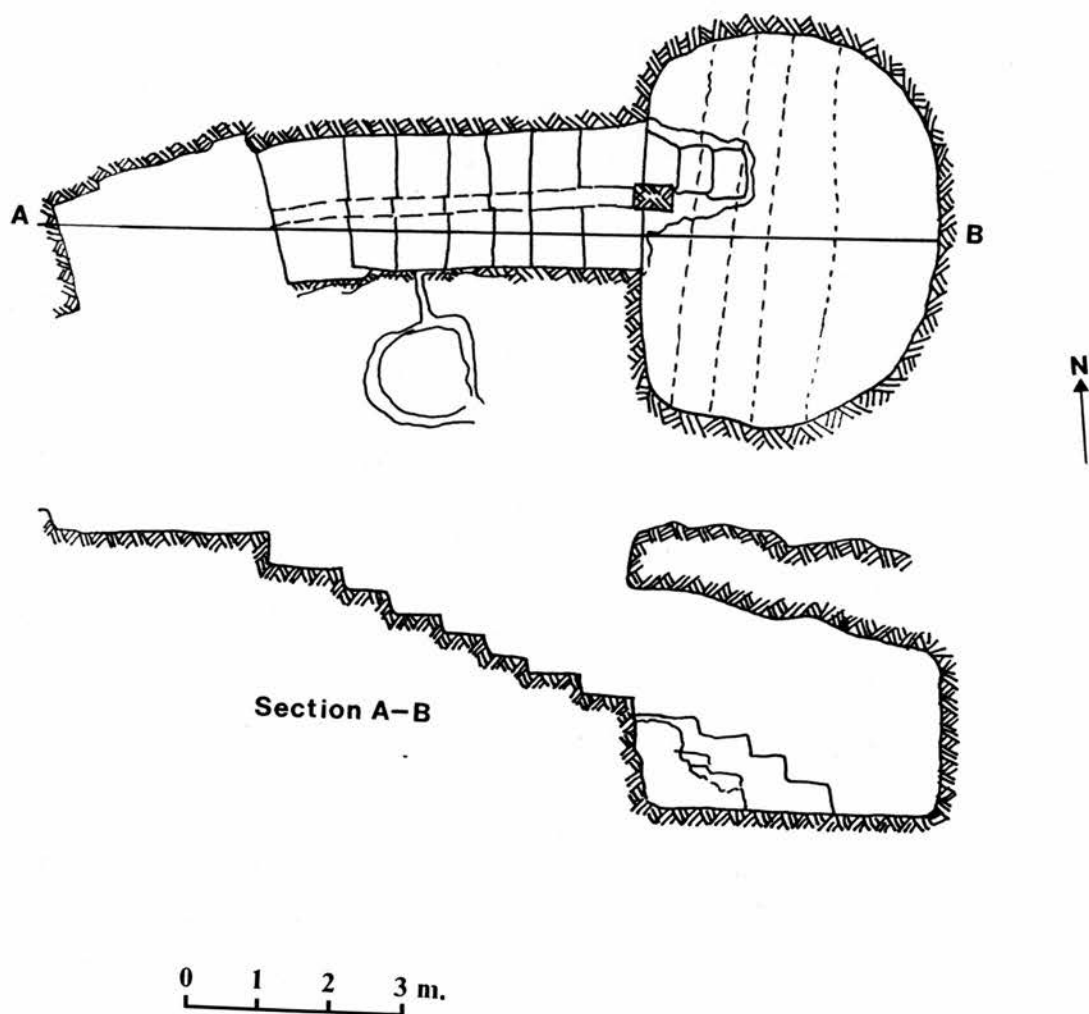


FIGURE 12.
After Saller, 1961.

FIGURE 13.
Based on
Testa, 1961.



FIGURE 14.
After Benoit and Boismard, 1951.



red drawings



holes in plaster



final layer of white plaster

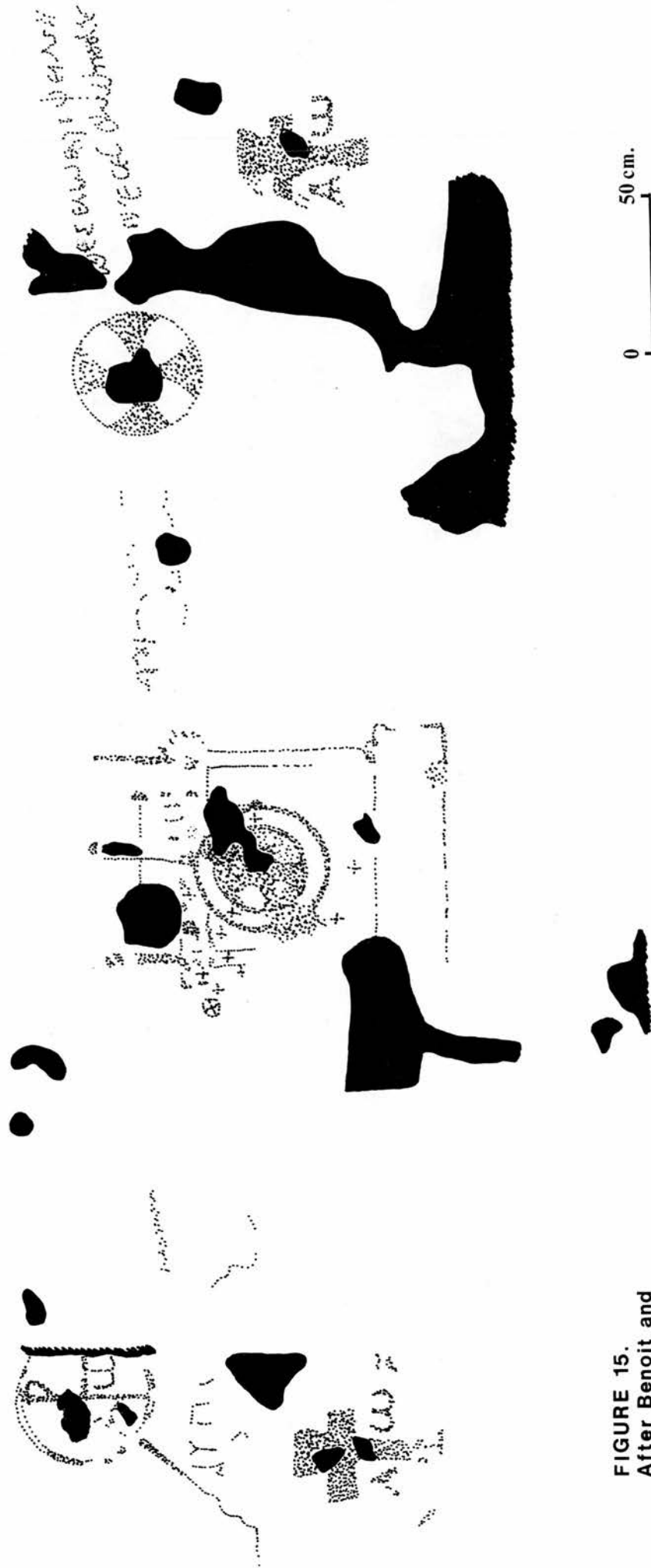


FIGURE 15.
After Benoit and
Boismard, 1951.

FIGURE 16.
After Corbo, 1965.

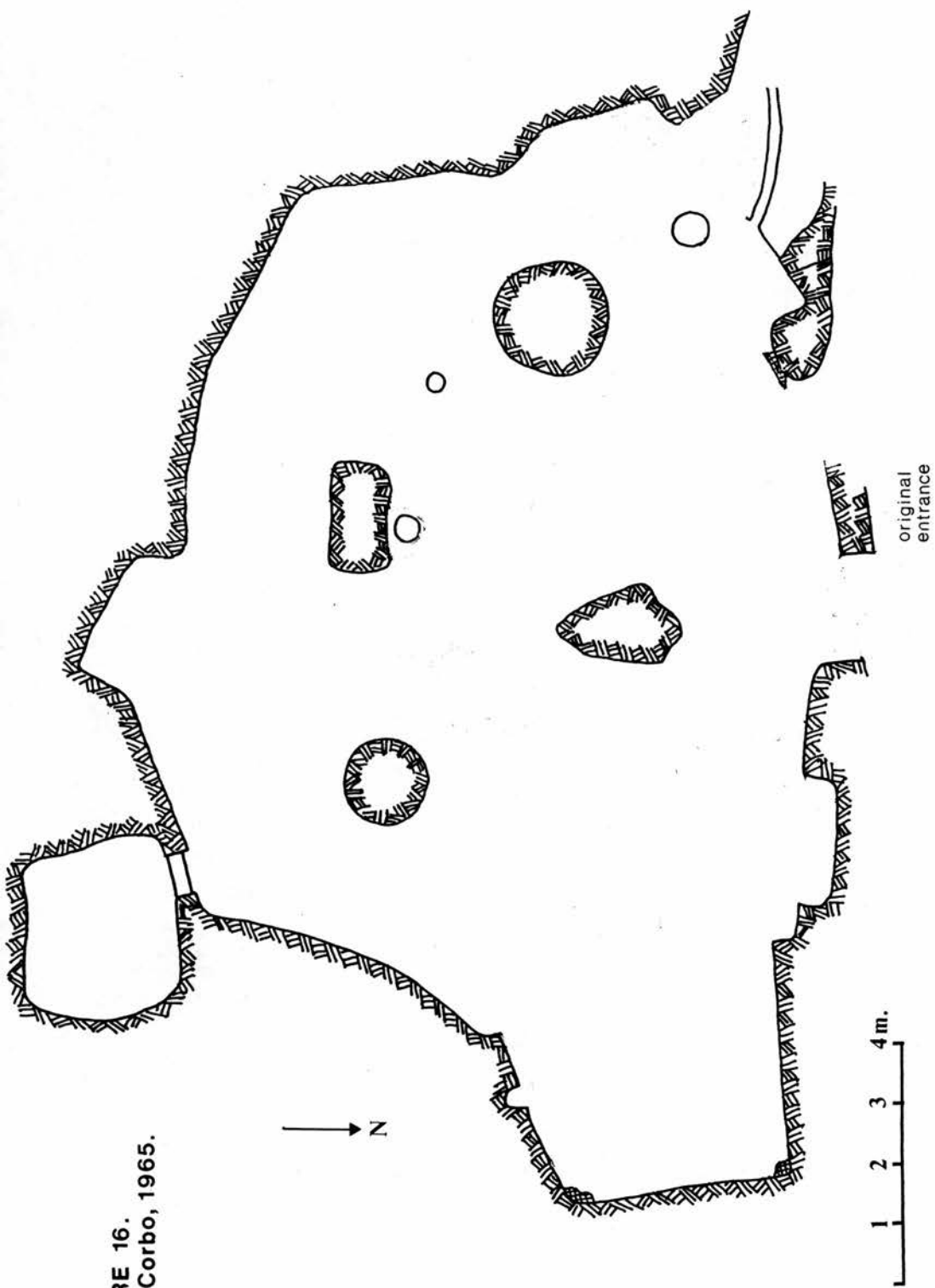


FIGURE 17.
Adapted from Bagatti, 1981.

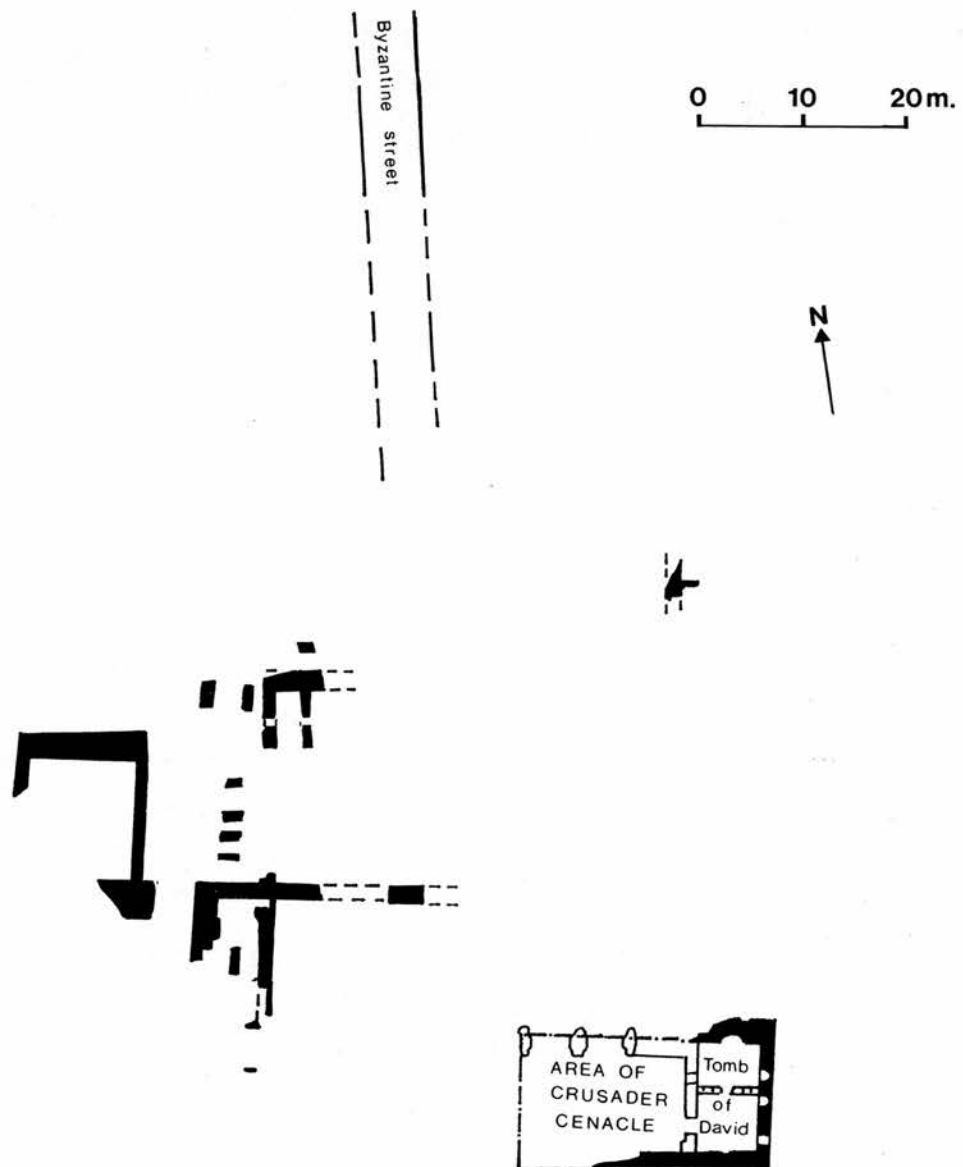
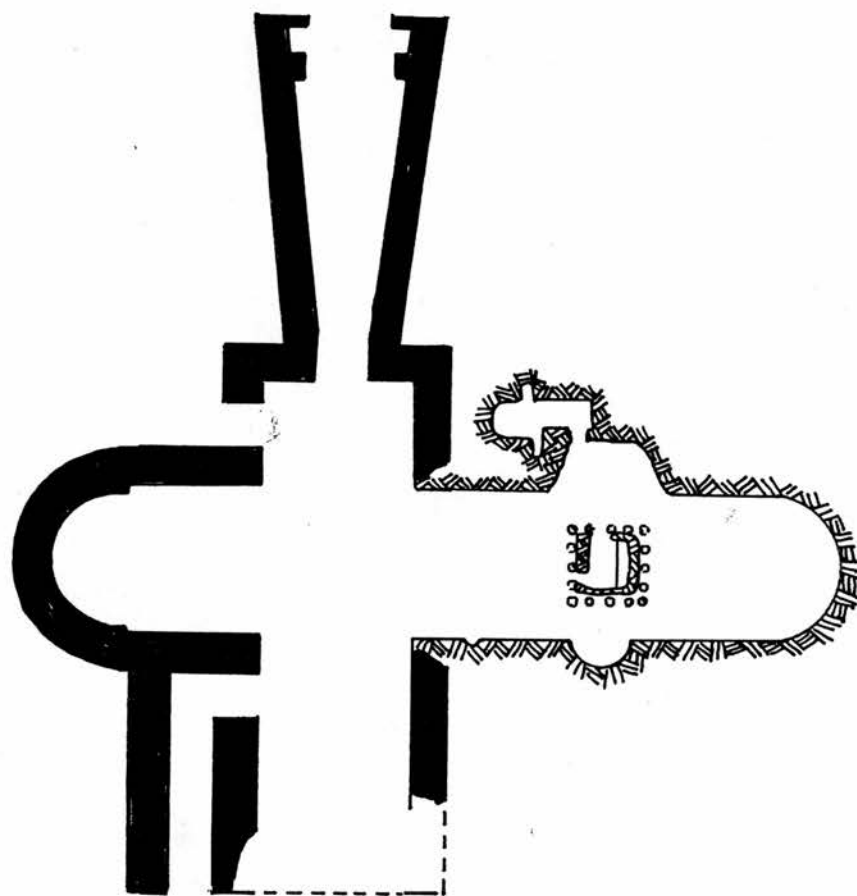


FIGURE 18.
After Bagatti, 1975.



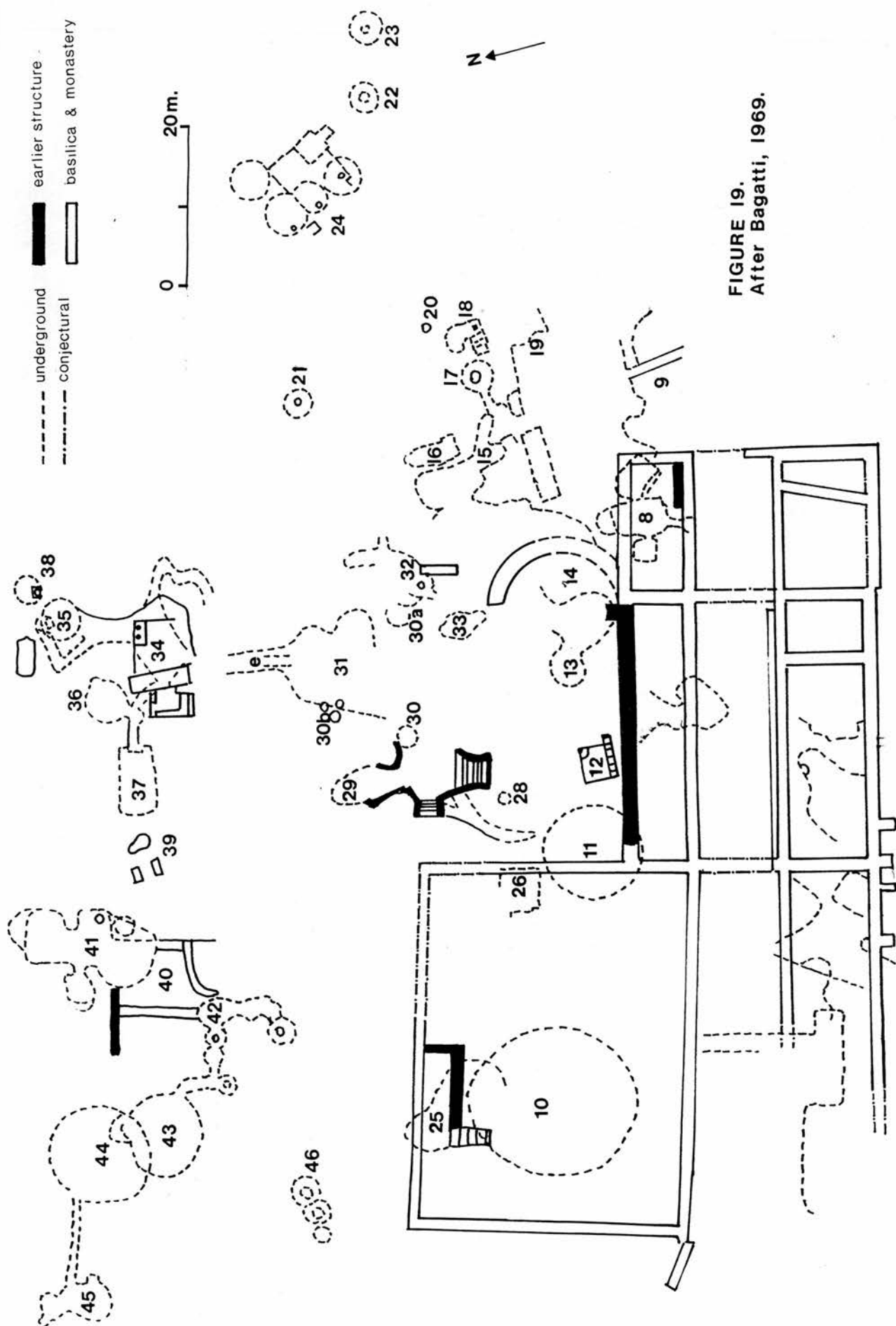


FIGURE 19.
After Bagatti, 1969.



FIGURE 20.

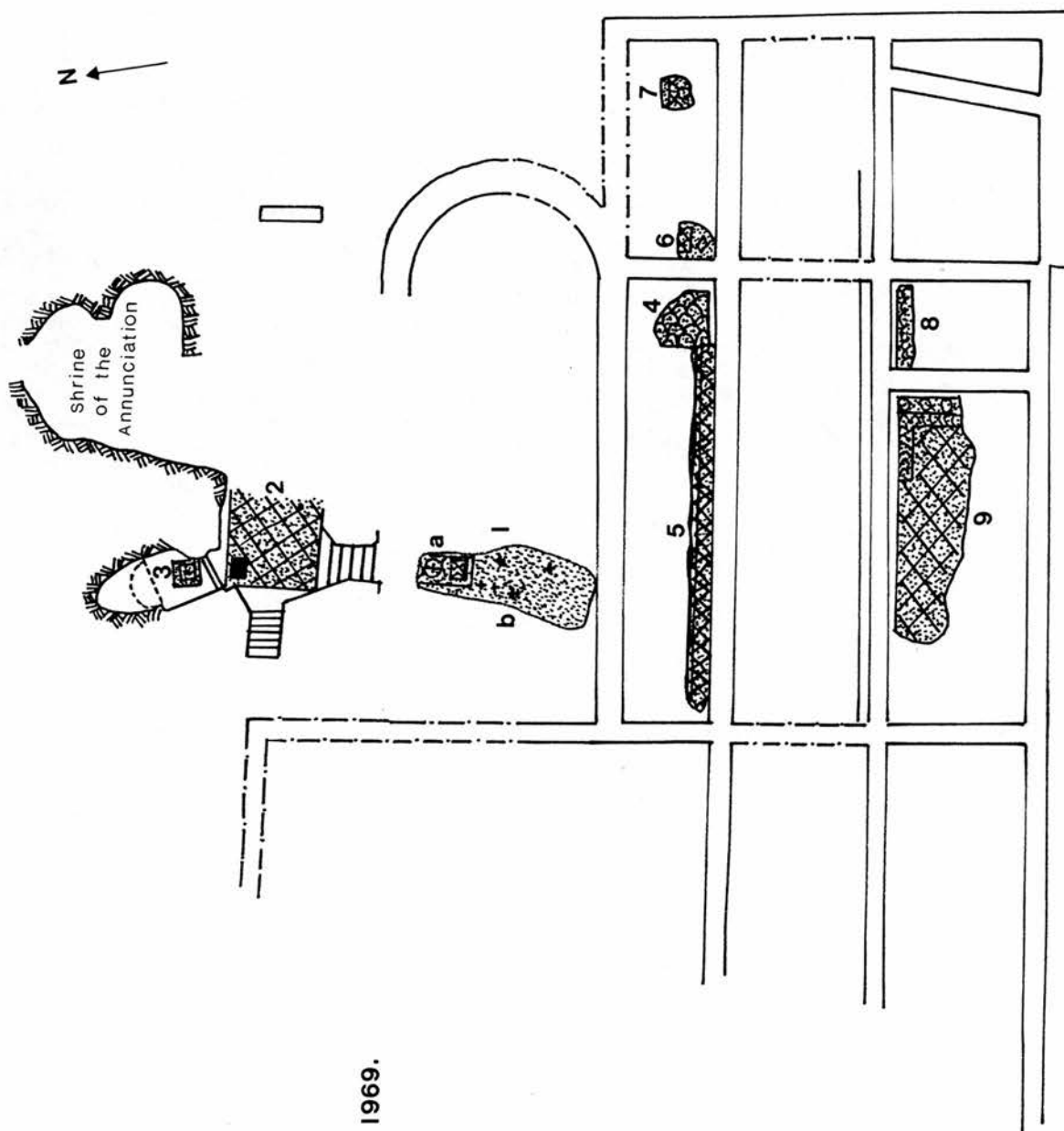


FIGURE 21.
After Bagatti, 1969.



FIGURE 22.

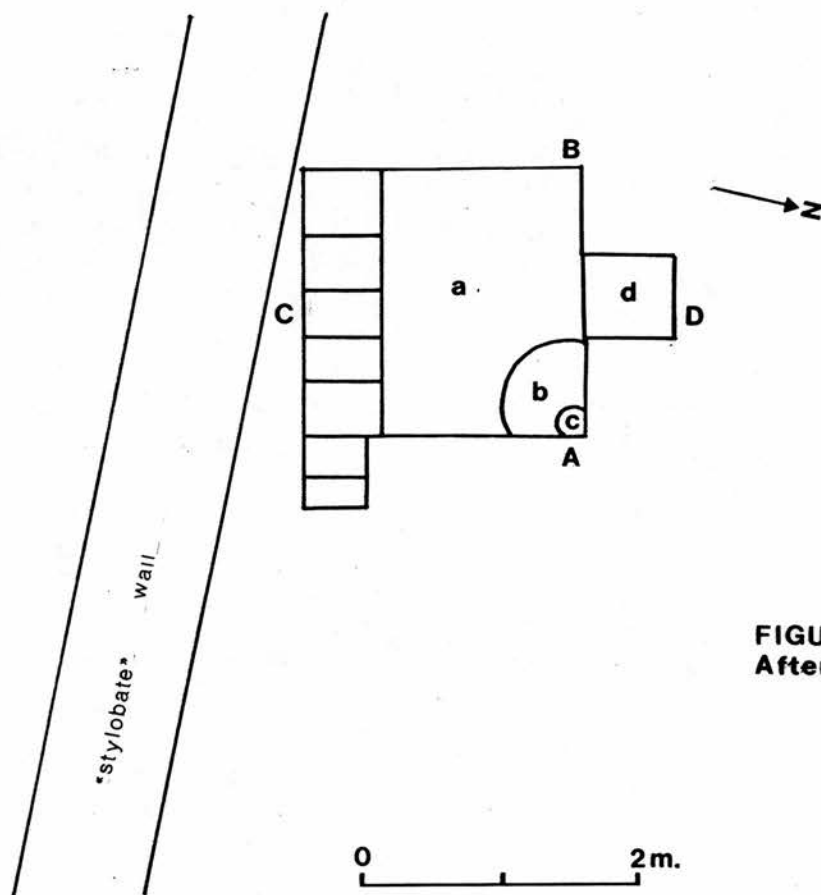
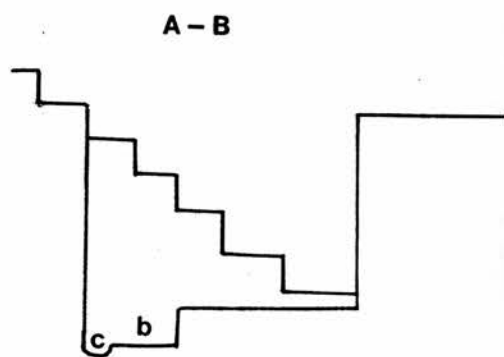
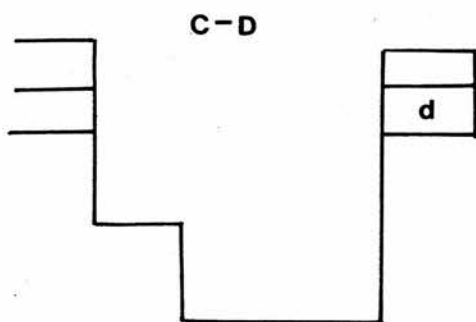
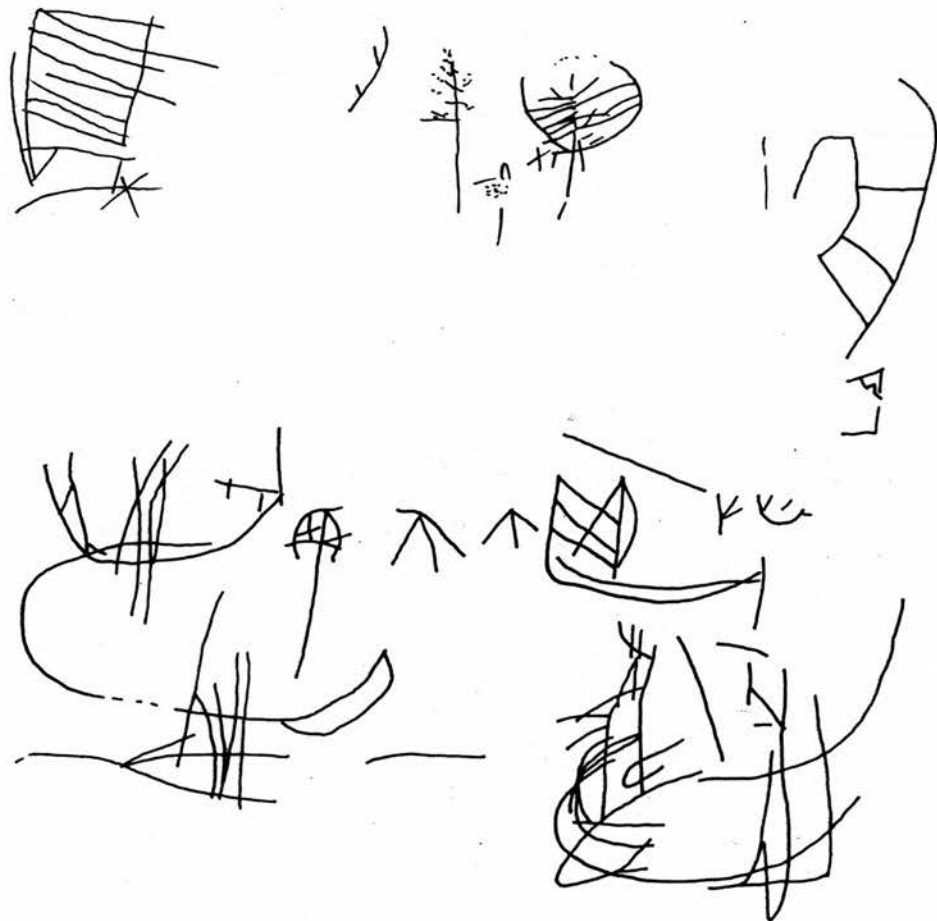


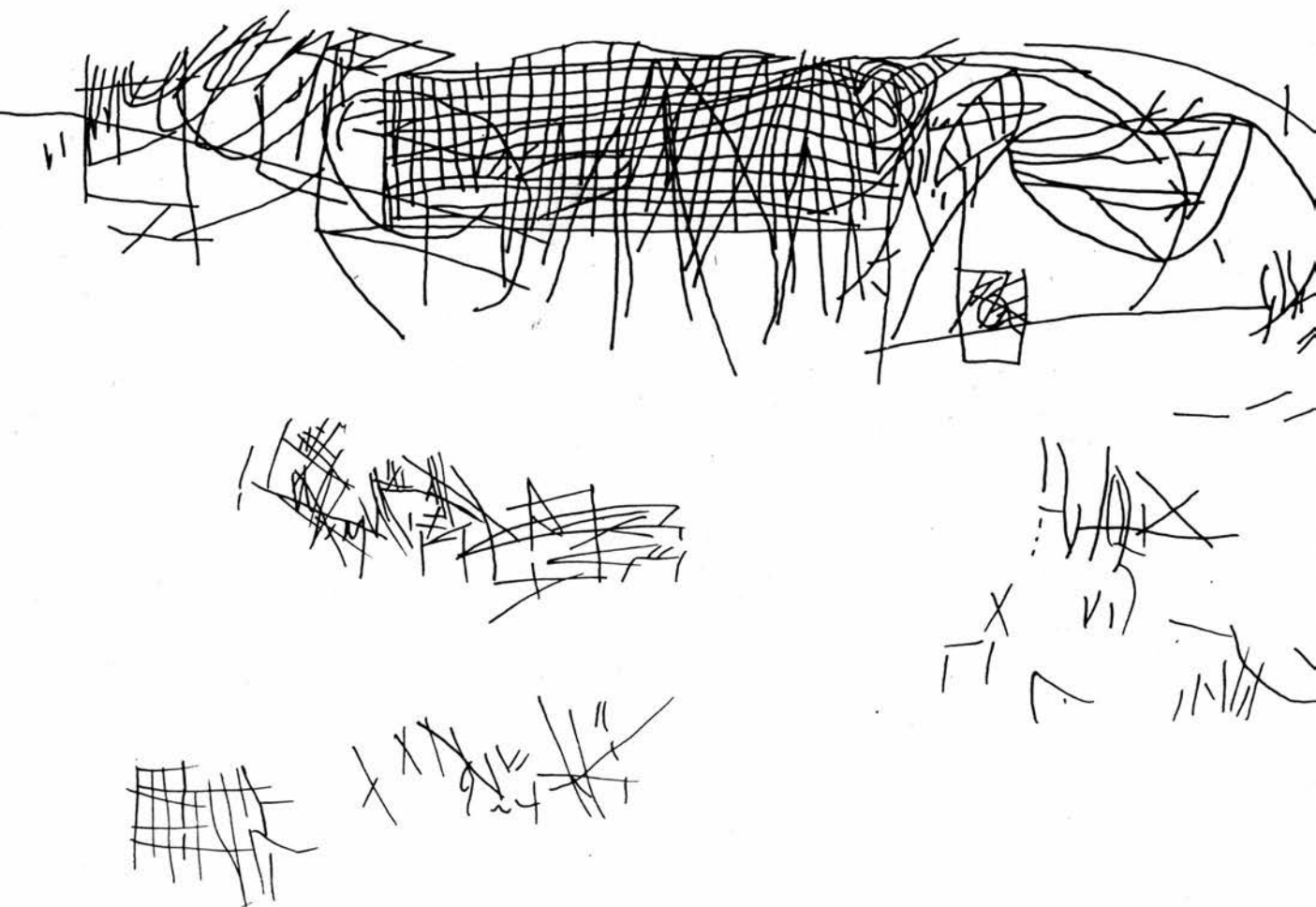
FIGURE 23.
After Bagatti, 1969.

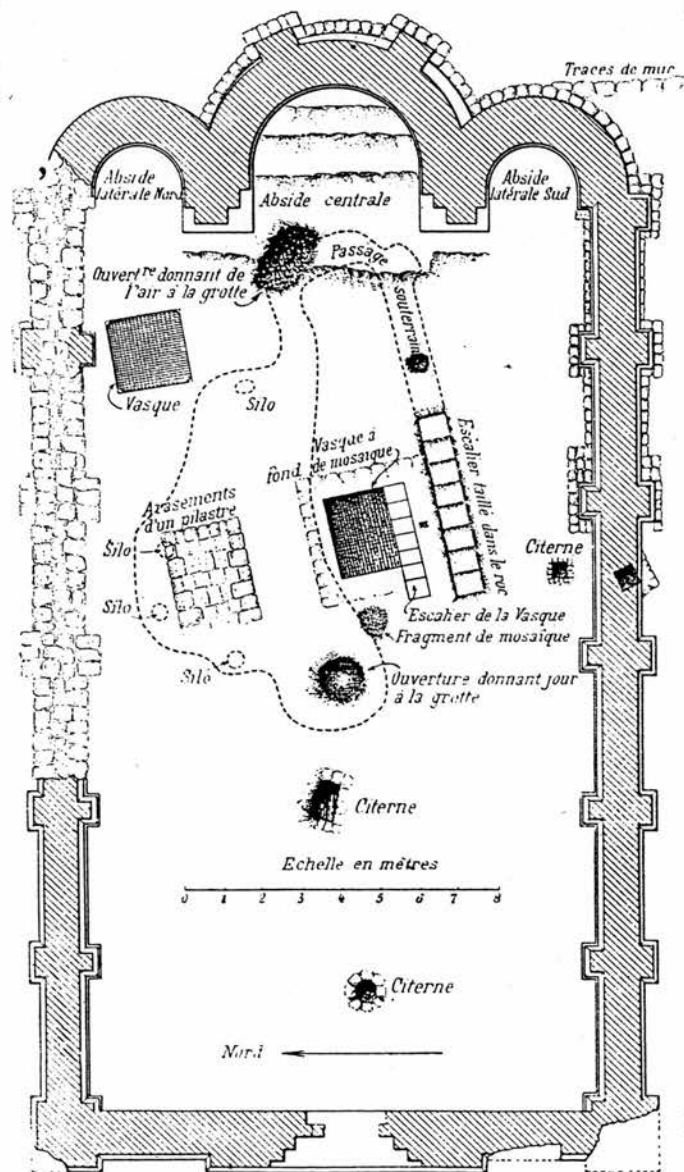




0 5cm

FIGURE 24.
After Bagatti, 1969.





Viaud's plan of the Church of St. Joseph.

FIGURE 25.

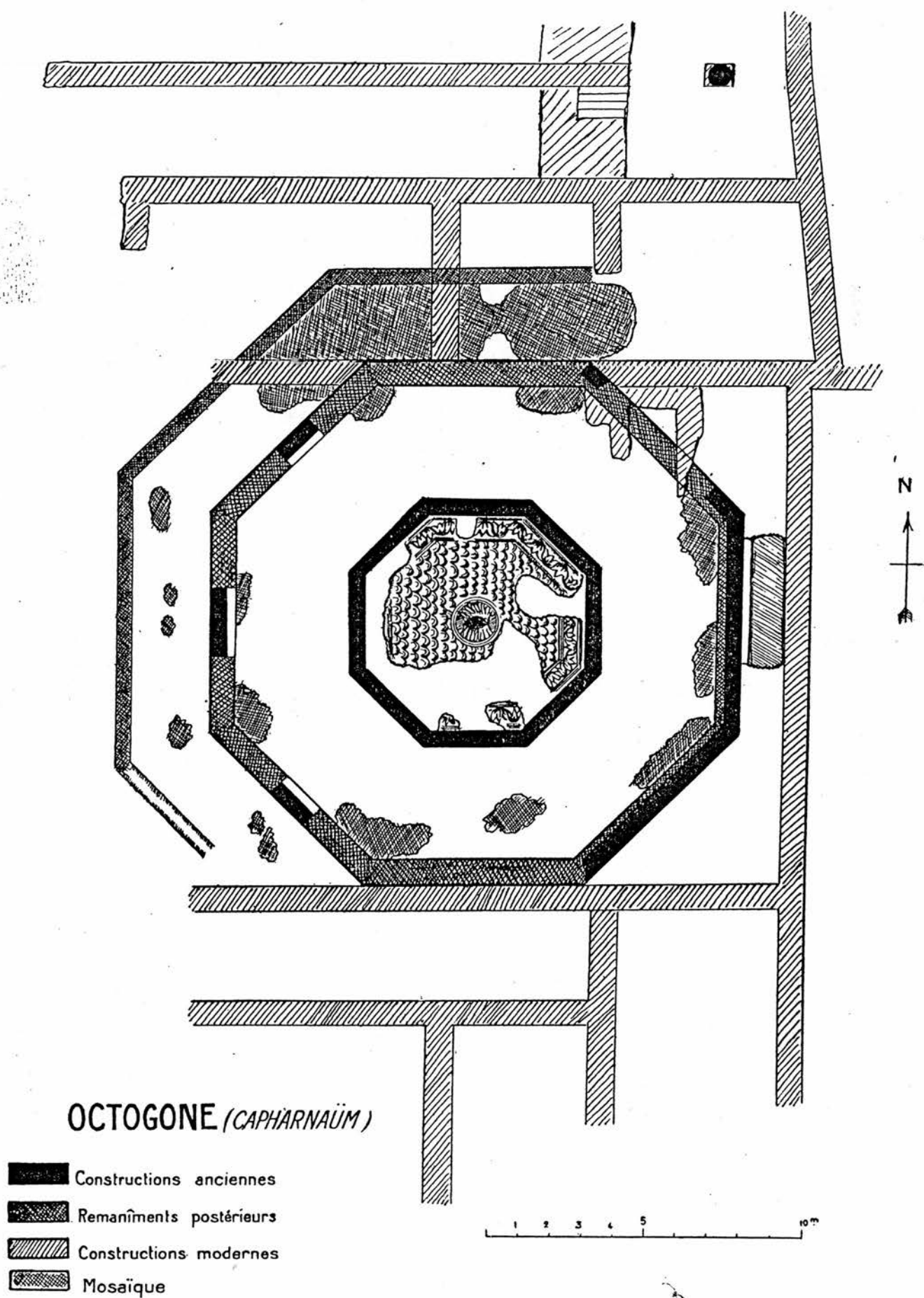
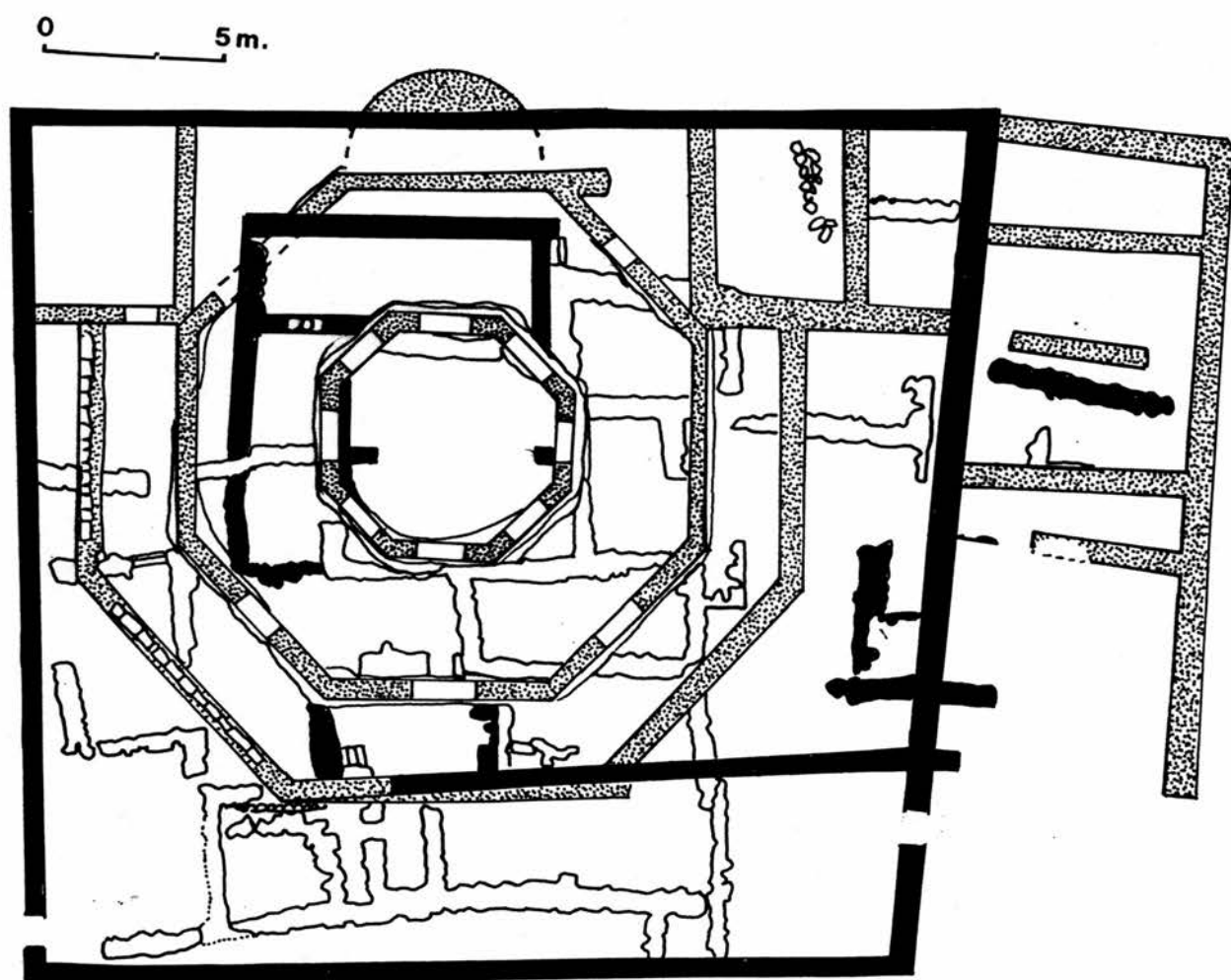


FIGURE 27. Orfali's plan of the octagonal structure.

FIGURE 28.
After Corbo, 1975.



N ←




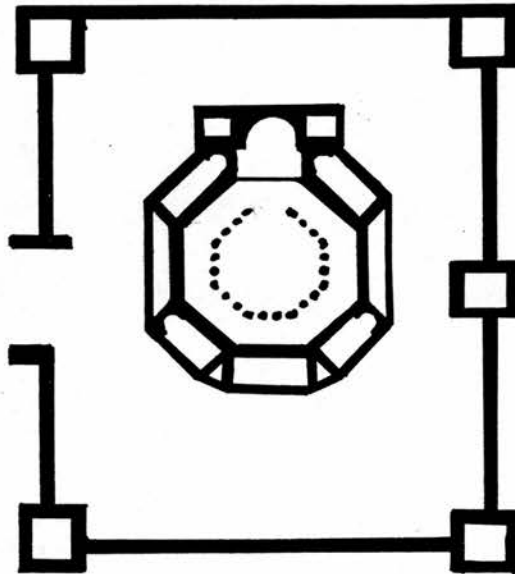
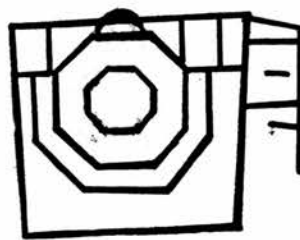
-  Hellenistic/Roman
-  4th cent.
-  5-6th cent.

FIGURE 29



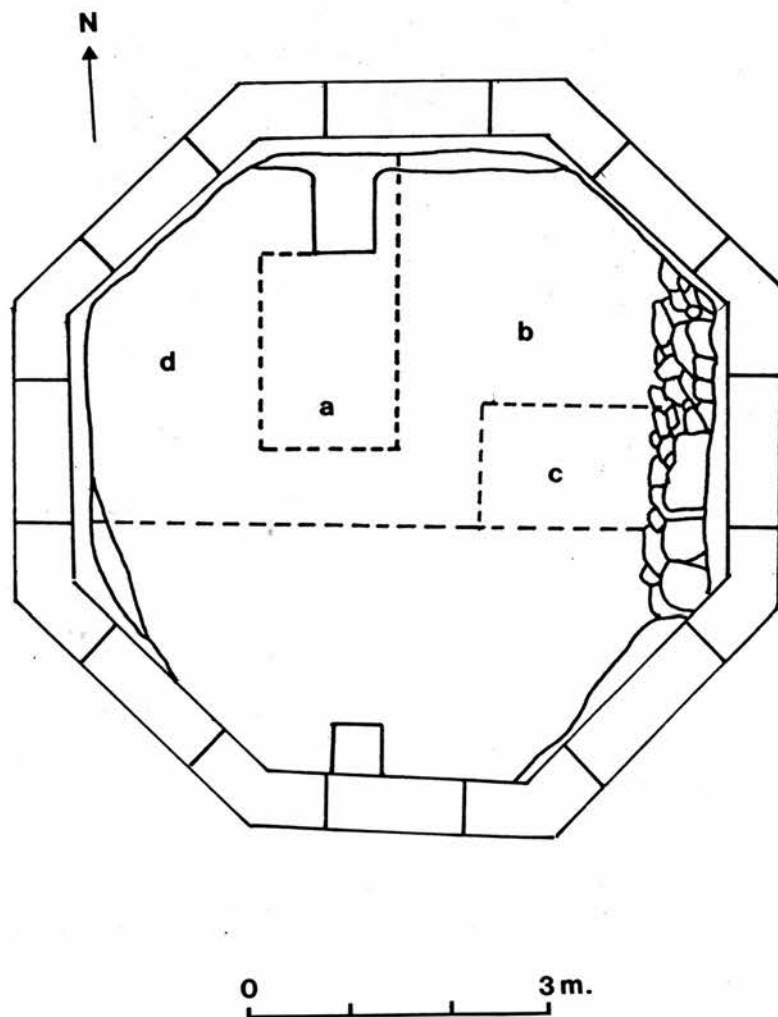
A: After Ovadia, 1970.

0 40m.



**B: Capernaum octagon,
same scale.**

FIGURE 30.
After Corbo, 1975.



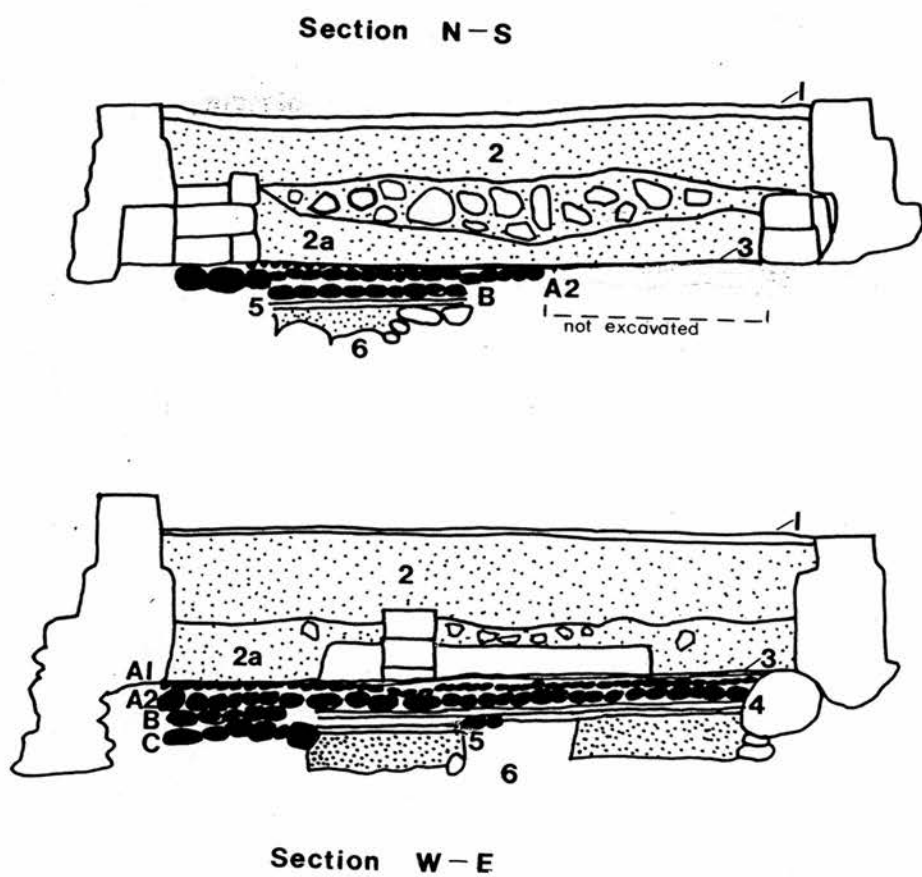


FIGURE 31.
After Corbo, 1975.

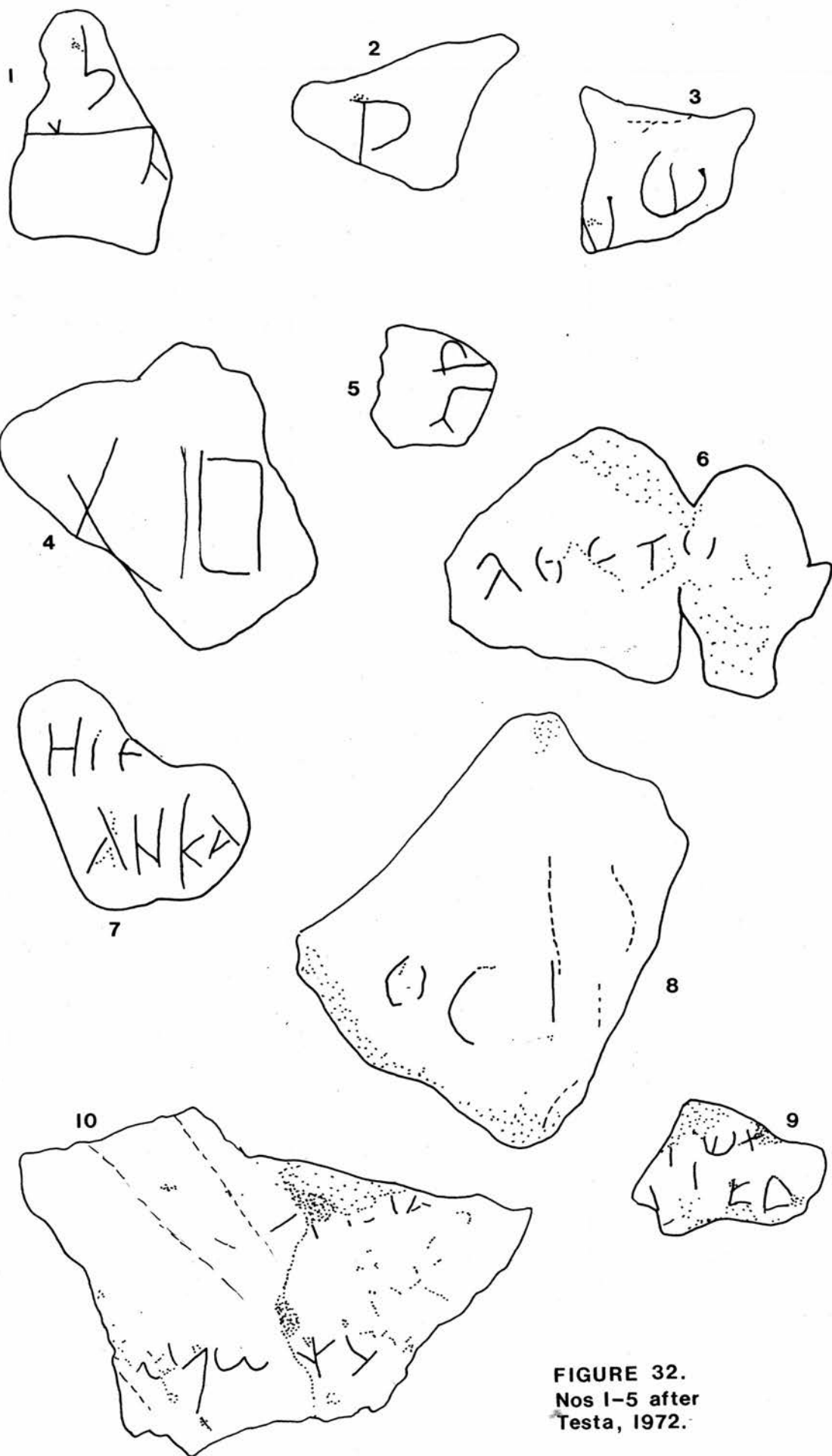


FIGURE 32.
Nos 1-5 after
Testa, 1972.

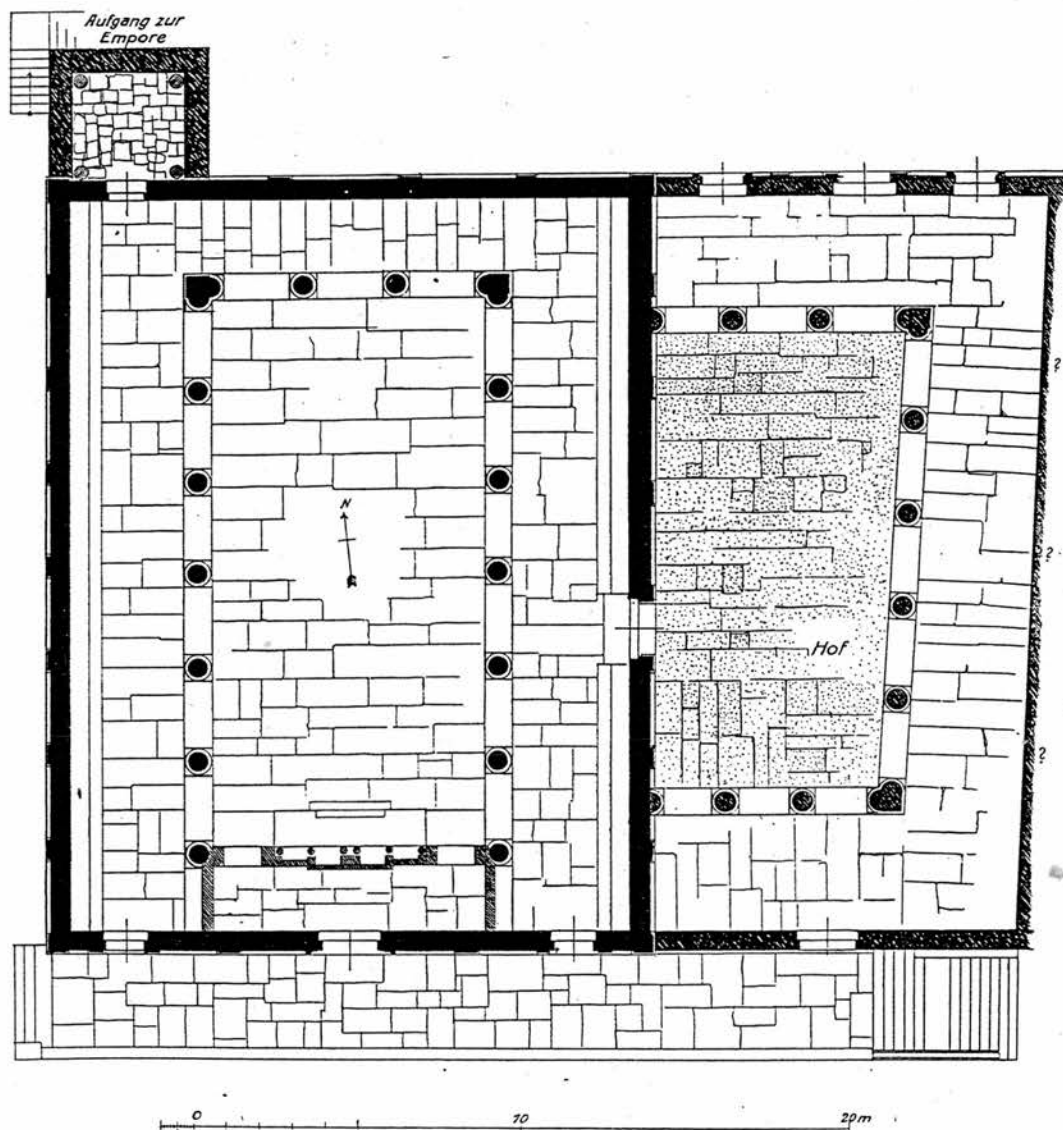


FIGURE 33. Plan by Kohl & Watzinger, 1916.



FIGURE 34.
After Vincent, 1908.

1 + חאח: כו אאחן ד בא
 2 נ ש א. חדש א בא.
 3 חא. אא. חא. חא.
 4 ג באא. ד באא. אאחא.
 5 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 6 אא. חא. חא. חא.
 7 אא. חא. חא. חא.
 8 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 9 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 10 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 11 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 12 אא. חא. חא. חא.
 13 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 14 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 15 * חא. חא. חא. חא.
 16 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 17 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 18 חא. חא. חא. חא.
 19 חא. חא. חא. חא.

FIGURE 35.
 After Dupont-Sommer, 1946.

FIGURE 36.
After Testa, 1962.

1 קמיע טב לתוס פו כחמאחר
 2 קדושא בדדו ובקדושיא שמו נכדו
 3 דקראל מלאך יהוה עורא אחיהא
 4 אחמיה אחיה אחיה אחיה וחסדו
 5 אל חיהוה אתו לאו כלל
 6 טלמי ודמא במגא כל נדך
 7 דנ יחיה אחיה וחסדו אל שדיא
 8 אל כ יחיה ב כ יחיה ב כ יחיה ב
 9 מר ע מר ע מר ע מר ע מר ע
 10 איך רע שחן חרן סר נחר חבמה
 11 וחר יחיה ב ח וחר חבמה וחר
 12 ח יא שם לעולם ועד ורומ ורעם
 13 ושמואל ומעוז לאחיה בכנניה
 14 חמוץ וינענו דש עים ע מנח כ
 15 תנע ח טלנית ודח זכר וקרב
 16 מן ארמן כחמא ב ארמן מרמא
 17 ואיב עיסו שמה אבד יח ומאדבע
 18 מאותעם קד כין וכל תשית לב כל
 19 עליה בניה תיחל מן זולט נעל
 20 חמא נמו עט לבנע ונחמלתיא
 21 נאח מרמא ב יח מרמא
 22 מרמא ב יח מרמא ב יח מרמא
 23 אמא מרמא ב יח מרמא ב יח מרמא
 24 אל חמא עזכות ונשם אגריית מן
 25 כדמאות ילאו במלכות אבנח
 26 ארבלח נאח לבאת קטבני יו
 27 מאות חר
 28
 29
 30
 31
 32
 33
 34
 35

חמא מרמא
 907.80

חמא מרמא
 חמא מרמא